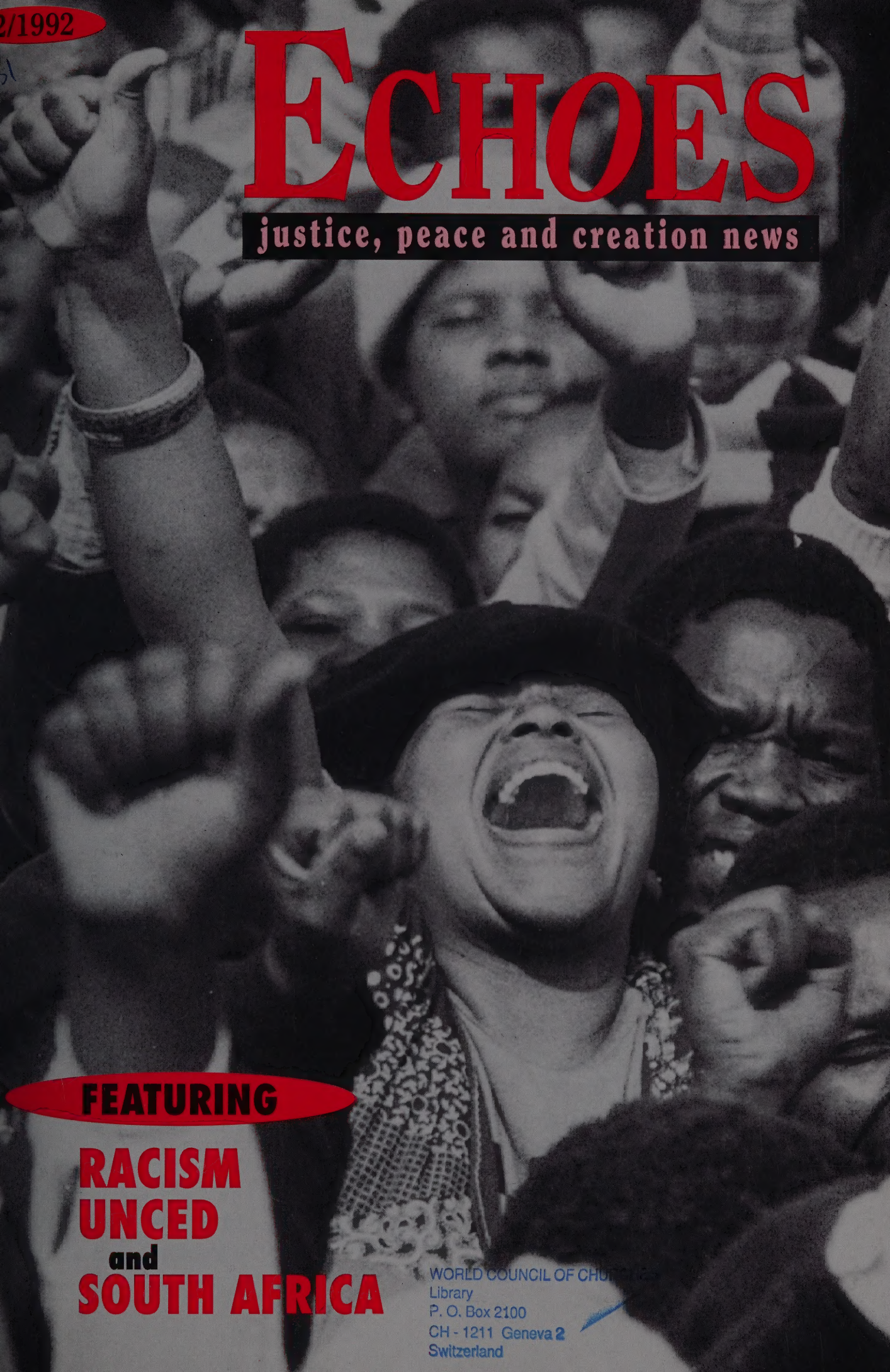
2/1992

ECHOES

justice, peace and creation news



FEATURING

RACISM
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SOUTH AFRICA

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Echoes From Elsewhere

An Introduction To Echoes Magazine In Reactions, Facts and Issues From All Over The World

Not Only The Police Are Racist

A week after the screening of "Cop it Sweet", the A.B.C. News showed video clips depicting two police officers , made up as Aborigines, with nooses around their necks. They were at a "Bad Taste" party in a rural town and a home-video of the event was made of the night. At the time Royal Commission hearing into Black Deaths in Custody were in process.

One young man mocked by a police officer died while in police custody. The other was brutally killed by police when they raided his home in Sydney in the early hours of the morning.

For those of us who have stood with Koori sisters and brothers over years, marched with them, and spoken out about the injustice within our law, and racism in our society, this terrible event, was obscene beyond belief.

Official apologies have been extended to the families affronted. Some disciplinary action has been taken against the policemen involved.

It is clear there is inherent racism in the police force. It is equally clear that there is deep racism in the Australian society. These events in 1992 highlight aspects of our society. The families whose loved ones have died in police custody across Australia tell graphic stories of racism in their places. Is there any Koori man or woman or child who has not experienced racism?

Comments of disgust by political leaders, and apologies by police leaders are not enough. Our society needs a program of racism awareness workshops as an integral part of all institutional training programs, and in all local communities. More, the true history of this country must be learned and acknowledged.

First appeared in "Elimatta" 1992, a newsletter of the Manly Warringah Aboriginal Group, P.O. Box 129, Narrabeen, NSW, 2101, Australia.

Nobel Peace Prize

The 1992 Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Rigoberta Menchu Tum of Guatemala, has been a regular participant in the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations which convenes each year in Geneva as well as attending many Indigenous and Women's Conferences in different parts of the world.

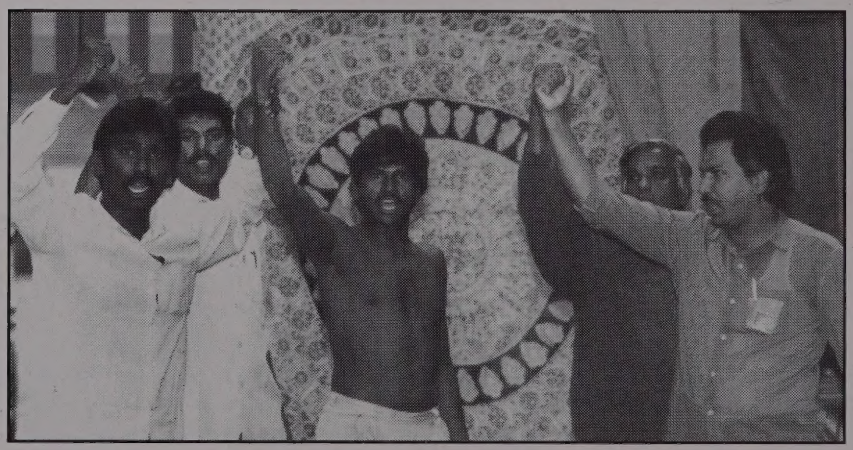
We rejoice at the recognition of the Indigenous struggle in Latin America and the Mayan People of Guatemala in particular.

Rigoberta Menchu ☞

Nationalism, Racism and Ethnicity

In accordance with decisions taken by WCC governing bodies International Affairs plans to develop work on the burning issues of nationalism, racism and ethnicity. The intention is to explore the issues in a variety of ways: in seminars (with those involved in situations of conflict), in theological reflection (what is the responsibility of Christians - of the church?), and by examining the response of international and regional bodies to conflict situations. Helping churches in their search for adequate legal and political protection, and mediation and monitoring disputes, will also be part of the long-term objective of the programme.

Churches in the Baltic region are already concerned and active. In October 1992 the church of Sweden - together with the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism - held a consultation on "Racism and Ethnic Conflicts in the countries around the Baltic States - A Call For A New Community". Minority Ethnic communities played an active role in the consultation, and findings were presented on "the community we strive for, the obstacles we have identified, and the church as a new community".



peter williams, wcc

During a recent visit to the World Council of Churches, a group from the Dalit Open University in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh India, performed some startling theatre portraying some of the realities of Dalit (so-called Untouchables) oppression.

peter williams, wcc

What hurt us Indians most is that our costumes are considered beautiful, but it's as if the person wearing them doesn't exist.

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Echoes
justice, peace and creation news

Echoes is an occasional publication of the World Council of Churches' Programme Unit III on Justice, Peace and Creation.
It is intended to share information and insights on the concerns of the former WCC sub-units, now in a restructured form in the WCC.
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Editorial

When will we ever **Learn***?*

Even as the cinders of the race riots in Los Angeles continue to smoulder, new racist attacks are reported in other parts of the world. Newspapers carry reports of attacks on foreigners by neo-nazi skinheads on asylum-seekers in Germany. Many of the attacks occur in the eastern part of the country, the former German Democratic Republic. In South Africa, the long-awaited peace and dismantling of apartheid has proved to be elusive, and fresh waves of state-sponsored, politically motivated violence have led to a collapse of negotiations between the African National Congress and the Pretoria government. In India violent attacks on Dalits are reported every now and then... When will we ever learn?

Racism is on the increase all over the world. Racist violence takes on new and ugly forms, tearing communities apart and affecting the very fabric of people's lives.

Los Angeles will go down in history as one more scandal. It shows that racism has gone beyond its classical manifestations in keeping communities apart. Hostility between the Korean community and Americans of African descent in Los Angeles led to outbreaks of violence, and the animosity quickly spread to other racially oppressed groups.

The worldwide economic crisis is at the root of the new expressions of racism and xenophobia. Economically dominant groups will not tolerate any threat to their power interests and will continue therefore to be the main instigators of violence. In Eastern Europe, the change from a centrally directed economic system to a market economy has led to expectations which cannot be fulfilled overnight; the resulting frustration finds violent expression in attacks on people who are 'different': foreigners, whose skin colour or language or culture distinguish them from the native population.

But racism goes beyond economic foundations. It is built on an ideology that has legitimized the superiority of one race over another — an ideology that has woven into history systems of domination and control and colonized large groups of people, marginalizing their knowledge and cultures. It is this ideology which continues to garner neonazi sentiment around the world, strengthening its global network of hatred and hostility, and jeopardizing communities which live in solidarity and sharing.

In a climate of growing hostility, the role of the church continues to be a critical one. The need for reconciling actions which draw together communities in conflict has been sharpened by recent events. The call is for brave and radical steps which can influence governmental and inter-governmental policies and deal with the structural causes of racism.

The World Council of Churches — in collaboration with member churches and movements, and particularly through its Unit on Justice, Peace and Creation — has strengthened its programmatic response to the fresh waves of racism and violence in the USA, Europe and South Africa. This issue of ECHOES reports on some of these actions as well as on situations of racism in various parts of the world.

Aruna Gnanadason

Introduction

Los Angeles "Earthquake"

The Reverend Madison T. Shockley II welcomed the WCC/NCCUSA delegation to Los Angeles last June 28th. The following excerpts are from his address, delivered at the Congregational Church of Christian Fellowship, UCC.

Tomorrow marks the second month since the April 29th uprising. Your visit is a welcome witness of God's care and concern for the suffering people of this city. It is indeed a strange setting for such a witness, for Los Angeles is the wealthiest city in the wealthiest state in the wealthiest nation on the face of the earth.

Yet is seems that the glitter from all this gold has blinded the eyes of those who possess it. Their eyes are blind to the sharp contrasts of the several realities that coexist within the city limits: ten million dollar homes and desperate, devastating homelessness; power and prowess wielded by people driving foreign cars and wearing fancy suits, and the anguish and exploitation of undocumented workers whose search for prosperity ends in disappointment and deportation...

Los Angeles is a city of denial. How else could one accept the high probability of a deadly earthquake and continue to live here? Denial about the possibility of earthquakes increases our capacity to deny other impending realities, such as a police department which has historically been employed to separate "civilization" from "anarchy". Historically the police have symbolized order, but African American youth have a different perception of them. The civil authorities have been powerless to curb police abuses, in spite of the fact that they have had to pay millions of dollars in compensation to the victims of police brutality.*

It is important that we do not allow the uprising to be depoliticized.

Rodney King was not the first case of police brutality. The Black community has witnessed a number of blatant cases that have resulted in deaths and varying degrees of disability. But this case was unique because it was captured on video tape and came to symbolize a pattern and history of abuse at the hands of the Los Angeles Police Department. This case offered a seemingly unambiguous opportunity for justice, an undeniable chance for the vindication of countless cases of abuse dismissed and denied by an inbred system of injustice. It was this set of rising expectations that blew the top off the April 29th volcano.

Los Angeles has undergone significant social transformation in the last decade. The Korean American population alone has increased one thousand per cent. These immigrants have filled economic niches that had been occuppied by other immigrants before them. This is also a niche that has traditionally been resented by the Black community.

I must admit that after three years of pastoring at Christian Fellowship Church, it was not until after the April 29th uprising that I walked across the street and knocked on the door of a Korean church and talked with the pastor. And in those fifteen minutes I learned more than I had in three years.

It is important that we do not allow the uprising to be depoliticized. Rodney King became a symbol for political justice for every Black person, especially for gang members who are constantly harassed by the police. His fate was a verdict on an entire people.

We invite the delegation to come and listen to the people of Los Angeles. We have arranged some conversations which you are invited to overhear. We hope these conversations will continue after the delegation has left. And so another contribution you make is encouraging us to talk among ourselves, and in too many cases, for the very first time.

* In a moment of the otherwise deadly serious proceedings, Rev. Shockley remarked that a planned trip to Disneyland could then be dispensed with, since the delegation had already had the "newest ride", the L.A. earthquake! Southern California was hit by a series of temblors and aftershocks measuring up to 6.1 on the Richter scale during the last week of April.

Pastoral Visit

WCC/NCCUSA in Los Angeles

Pastoral Visit

In a pastoral visit to the devastated communities of Los Angeles last June, members of a joint delegation from the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches (USA) heard testimony from local residents which mirrors the plight of many urban dwellers in the United States. The visit was to express solidarity with the residents of Los Angeles following the widespread violence which took place last April, when four policemen accused of the brutal beating of a Black motorist were acquitted. Participants also included representatives of the South African Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches in Korea, and Church Women United U.S.A.

Racism - sometimes subtle, often overt - was cited as the cause, not only of police brutality, but of the economic distress of the centre city. Pastors in both African American and Korean American churches agreed that the Los Angeles media had exacerbated the problem by failing to report the causes of the violence.

Listening Posts

Listening Posts - strategic places within the various ethnic communities - had been set up in twelve locations to give residents the chance to air their grievances and to dialogue with others. They were well visited. "Hundreds, thousands of experts have passed quickly through Los Angeles", one Los Angeles youth told the church leaders. "They have taken a quick look and made their reports. The trouble is, they haven't listened and therefore don't really know how we feel."

The listening posts and the day-long consultation at the Young Nak Korean Presbyterian Church provided a setting where leaders of the sometimes antagonistic ethnic religious groups could talk together candidly. According to the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, "The presence of the world church - especially representatives form Korea and South Africa - made it possible for the African Americans and Korean Americans in Los Angeles to be more honest with one another. We brought them together and they were forthright with each other."

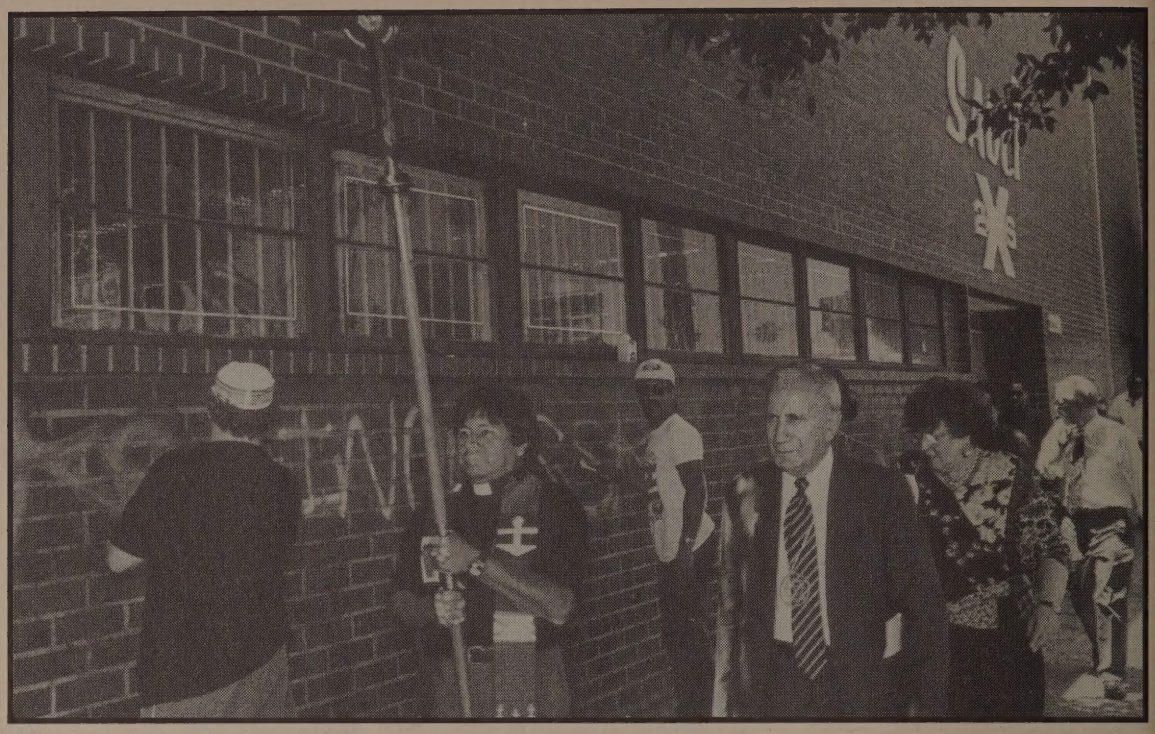
At the listening post held at Shepherd of the Valley United Church of Christ in Simi Valley, members of that predominantly white congregation discussed how the trial of police who had beaten Rodney King affected their relations with a neighbouring African American congregation. At the end of the evening's conversations - often intense - the two congregations pledged publicly to continue the dialogue and take concrete steps to end the racism that has divided them.

Another listening post, held in Wilshire United Methodist Church, provided an example of a congregation in which four distinct ethnic groups work together. Hispanic, African American, Filipino and White American members of that congregation were in substantial agreement in their analysis of the situation in Los Angeles. They expressed concern that plans for renewal in their city are not based on the express needs of the people themselves.

Bishop Vinton Anderson of the Los Angeles district of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and a president of the WCC, identified himself with the struggle for justice in the area. "I am South Central L.A.," he said. "I am Rodney King. I am the hungry mother, standing in line for food, for a job, for health care for her children. The fires of Los Angeles were predictable. And the next fires also can be predicted unless changes take place. What some call 'riots' were, in fact, an economic referendum."

"...the trouble is, they haven't even listened and therefore don't really know how we feel..."

Members of two Los Angeles street gangs, who met with the church leaders, stressed that economic and educational issues are at the core of their city's problems. "We must have employment opportunities right here in South Central Los Angeles," the gang leaders told church officials. "And the stores and industries must be locally owned." One of the recurring themes in the listening posts was that federal and state governments have ignored the



WCC General Secretary Dr. Emilio Castro in the streets of Los Angeles

chris lovdahl, ncc usa

needs of African Americans and Hispanics in Los Angeles, especially in stimulating local business. The gang leaders agreed that the welfare system should be ended. "They told us that it is economic development that is needed - manufacturing plants, state-sponsored works projects, and small business development - and nursery schools and child care centres so that mothers can work."

In the aftermath of the Los Angeles uprising, the two gangs agreed on a truce because, as they told the church leaders, "there is no future for any of us if we keep killing each other."

The Rev. William Watley, pastor of St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church in Newark, N.J., and a vice president of the National Council of Churches, warned Korean Americans against buying into the myth of America as a land of economic opportunity for all." He said an effective urban strategy must be based on a realistic assessment of racism in politics and in the market place.

The president of the National Council of Churches, the Rev. Syngman Rhee, himself a refugee from North Korea at the time of the Korean War, pointed out the similarities between the Black and Korean experiences in the United States and urged the two groups to work together, and with other ethnic groups, to claim political and economic freedom. He stressed, particularly, that both groups have found the church to be a source of unity, and the ecumenical movement a significant point of contact with other Christians. "Together," he said, "in the National Council of Churches we can work together to fight racism."

Brigalia Bam, associate general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, was one of the church officials who spent an evening with the Common Council of Church Women United which was meeting simultaneously in Los Angeles. She observed that in South Central Los Angeles, as in South Africa, it is women and children who often suffer first and most. The CWU Council had learned that in the wake of the uprising thousands of women, without transportation, were virtually unable to obtain food and other supplies for their infants and children. Day care facilities also were closed for several weeks, severely curtailing the earning power of many mothers.

Pilgrimage

During their time in Los Angeles, the ecumenical visitors joined with members of local congregations in a pilgrimage through the central city and Los Angeles' Hispanic community. Carrying a cross and stopping at such places as City Hall, Police Headquarters, a food distribution centre, and offices of the Los Angeles Times, the group used prayers and reading to re-enact in a contemporary context the "Stations of the Cross," a reference to Jesus' pilgrimage along the 'via dolorosa' - the way of suffering and death.

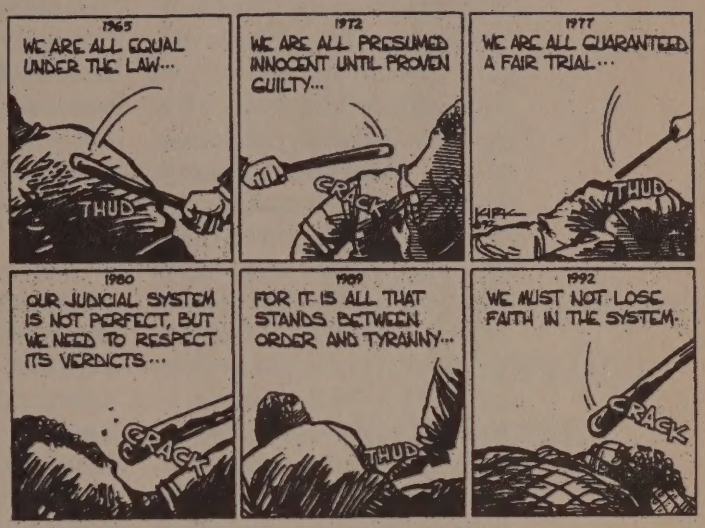
The Ecumenical visit closed with a celebration of hope and commitment in Los Angeles, held at First African Methodist Episcopal Church. During the service, conducted in English, Spanish and Korean, the choirs of Angelica Lutheran Church and the Young Nak Korean Presbyterian Church joined those of the First A.M.E. Church in anthems and freedom songs.

Strategies

In his sermon there, WCC General Secretary Emilio Castro spoke of 'the peace of God', which permitted church leaders in Serbia and Croatia to embrace one another despite the warfare that was tearing their societies apart. "Jesus' promise of peace - not as the world gives - is central to the Christian faith," Castro said, citing the ecumenical witness in Los Angeles and elsewhere as a message of hope and demonstration of reconciliation.

NCC/USA has in the meantime announced plans to draft a strategy to help congregations of the Council's 32 member denominations deal with the problems of America's urban areas. It was expected that NCC officers would discuss the needs of U.S. cities with political candidates after the nominating conventions of last summer.

And WCC's Central Committee, which met last August, approved a proposal to send an ecumenical fact-finding team to the USA next year to draw attention to the continuing violations of human rights of citizens. ❑



kirk anderson, qc

Adapted from press release 62NCC7/6/92.

Sermon

WCC General Secretary Urges **Reconciliation**

We have come to Los Angeles to listen and to learn.

We have come because the problems of Los Angeles, important as they are to you, are important to all of us, members of the same body of Christ, members of your family. But also because whatever solution can be found in relation to Los Angeles will be of inspiration for many other cities in the world facing similar problems.

In fact, while we are concerned with Los Angeles today, I remember that churches in Venezuela went through similar circumstances not many months ago, because an economic and social system that produces marginalization and poverty, reaps the consequences of such injustice.

In a given moment society says 'this cannot be', and sometimes it says so in not very constructive ways.

Will of God

We are addressing the question of life in Los Angeles according to the will of God, but we might at the same time relate to the problems of practically every country in the world.

The Bible text that has been read for inspiration this morn-

ing (Lk 9:51-62) is appropriate to this situation. Remember, Jesus' disciples were going to Jerusalem. The moment had come for him to confront death, to confront the powers that be and through death and resurrection to provide a way out for the whole of humankind. That was a clear decision, present in the minds of the disciples. Going to Jerusalem, they passed through Samara. Now the Samaritans were not very close friends of the Jews and the Jews did not very much admire what was going on in Samara. Once again, there was no room in Samara for Jesus; no hospitality was provided him or his disciples. Then some of the disciples came to Jesus and complained. "Do you want us to call fire from heaven to punish them, like the prophets of the Old Testament?" they asked. The Samaritans and the Jews were disdainful of one another. The logical result was a situation of confrontation. Fire from heaven or from earth. But Jesus rebuked them, saying, 'The Son of God has not come to judge, but to save. He has come to liberate,' and that applies to all the others, even to the Samaritans.

It is interesting to follow the evolution of the relationship between Jesus and the Samaritans in the Gospels. Just one chapter later we hear the beautiful story of the good Samaritan. Just imagine that I once found myself in a situation of conflict between the democratic forces and the oppressive military establishment in my country, Uruguay, where we 'enjoyed' a military dictatorship for several years. Suddenly, I could tell a story where the good guy, the hero, was a general or a colonel in the army. I confess that it did not cross my mind to do so for several years. But that is what Jesus did to the disciples who wanted to bring down fire on the Samaritans: he admonished them to look inside those people whom they considered their enemies to see the manifestations of another spirit. So let us be attentive, let us open our eyes to the allies who are there where we never thought they would be.

Remember another incident in which Jesus asked the Samaritan woman at the well for a drink of water. Instead of getting angry with her questioning reply, Jesus engaged the woman in conversation. In the end this woman becomes a witness to the person of Jesus Christ, and then the Samaritans in her town come to see and hear Jesus. "We believe now, ... because we ourselves have heard him, and we know that he really is the Saviour of the world."

So movements of Spiritual renewal are possible inside the others' communities too. The real problem is that we often think in caricatures. For many years whenever someone was talking about Latin Americans like myself, immediately there came to mind the image of someone sleeping against a wall with a big sombrero, enjoying siesta. That was the picture many had of Latin Americans: we were people who made siesta. But what is the picture of African Americans, American Indians, Chicanos or Hispanics, etc.? We are playing with caricatures. Some of those caricatures relate to some historical experience. We cannot be blind to the fact that there has been hate, there has been slavery; that cannot be forgotten. There are caricatures on all sides that have been created out of a tragic historical experience. We have seen that the Bible is realistic, but the Bible is also hopeful. It reminds us to be realistic, but also to remain open to the spirit. It is always possible to start again.

Now let us look at a few examples. In the book of Genesis, for instance, there is the story of Uncle Abram and his nephew, Lot. Their two clans have grown, as have the herds of animals belonging to each of them, and clashes are beginning to take place between them. "Then Abram said to Lot, 'Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herders and my herders; for we are kindred... Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." Of course those were idyllic times; there was plenty of land and they could move elsewhere. But what is important is that although the problem was not solved and the reconciliation did not take place, life was protected. Through the separation there was at least a chance to discuss

We have come to Los Angeles to listen and to learn ... I remember that churches in Venezuela went through similar circumstances not many months ago.

later and to negotiate, to embrace, to celebrate. But unless the conditions for peace are assured, unless there is an armistice, there is no way forward.

I think that we need to apply this kind of realism to our own situations. For the moment, we need to stop the violence. Let us create the social conditions that assure a minimum material quality to the life of everybody, so as to avoid despair; otherwise people without any assurance for today will have no hope for tomorrow. So, the first message of the Bible passage is 'Be hopeful, be realistic.' It is possible to discover values within the other communities, it is possible to generate values there. At the same time, let us start by trying to assure that life is protected.

Embrace

The Bible tells other such stories. There is another beautiful chapter of the book of Genesis that has to do with the process of coming together of the two brothers, Jacob and Esau. It is a fabulous piece about walking - walking toward reconciliation. It tells of the fear with which Jacob comes back to meet his brother, how he tries to bribe him by sending gifts, how he cowardly tries to put his wives and children in the forefront, hoping that his brother would have pity on them. But Esau had already forgiven his brother, though Jacob didn't know that. Jacob had such a caricature of his brother in his mind that he was not prepared for the embrace that was waiting for him at the end of the road. But out of fear, out of nostalgia for home, out of a guilt complex, - for what ever reason -he began to walk, and by coming together with his brother, made it possible for the embrace to take place. In other words, do not expect that reconciliation among the communities in Los Angeles or in South Africa, or in the Middle East will take place overnight, out of a miracle done by the powerful hand of God. It will happen in a given moment, when we have begun by assuring life and have started to talk to each other, even in a situation of tense negotiation and mistrust.

The miracle of reconciliation, which may come after such negotiation, is, I would say, the prize that God is reserving for us. Another biblical example of such reconciliation is the parable of the prodigal son. Remember, he went out to enjoy life, but in the end was getting on very poorly, competing with the pigs, etc. When he realized how badly he was living, he decided to return to his father's house, where there was food enough and to spare. He planned to confess his sins, and ask his father to treat him as a hired hand. Sometimes preachers use this story as an example of repentance. But his was not repentance; it was pure self interest: he wanted to eat, nothing wrong with that. He was trying to protect his situation when he went towards his father.

We are victims of yesterday, prisoners of history.

The significant thing is that he began to walk in the right direction, even if his motivation was wrong. When the father saw him, he ran and embraced

The miracle of reconciliation, which may come after such negociations, is, the prize that God is reserving for us.

him and only at that moment, when the forgiveness of the father is given, did he realize that he had no plan of salvation of his own that could be useful. "I have sinned against heaven, and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." he concludes. The miracle of reconciliation takes place not out of his own good motivation but out of the outpouring love of the real prodigal, the father of the parable.

Building Anew

So we need to create the structures that will oblige us to be close to each other. Surely people living in the beautiful surroundings of Los Angeles which were not touched by the riots might be tempted to collaborate in the solution of the problems out of fear that next time the situation could be different; or they might, out of a sense of pity, feel obliged to give something. The motivation might be all wrong, but the real question is, Are we walking towards the other; are we creating a structure where caricatures may be torn down, where we may discover the other and the other discover us as human beings, children of the loving God? Are we creating the structures of society that will oblige us to be together and work together? In the process, the miracle of reconciliation may happen.

We Christians cannot be satisfied with the building, or as I heard said yesterday, the rebuilding of Los Angeles. Some people say that if you rebuild, you keep the old problems. Others say we need to build from scratch, a new Los Angeles. It may be that people are coming to rebuild. Let them come, and let us be sure that in the process we bring to the table all the dreams of what could be, so that in fact, we will building something new. But unless we build structures of conversation and collaboration, there can be no hope of real reconciliation.

Reconciliation

Los Angeles, serious as it is, is a minor case. Look at Palestine and the Middle East: how do you bring about reconciliation between those two people that have been murdering each other over the last fifty years? How can you make progress towards peace if not through the delicate exercise of negotiation? We lose patience, we would like to see peace tomorrow. But the real conversation must start among those who hate each other but who know, out of a selfish self-understanding, that there is no other way but to live together. And in due time we will see the surprise that the Shalom or the Salaam peace of God may become reality. You see what is going on in South Africa: Churches are pulling more toward the middle of that conflict. They are proclaiming that reconciliation is possible, but they are insisting that there should be negotiation; that there should be checks and balances; that there should be guarantees; that there should be restitution; that justice should be implemented, not necessarily out of love, until love appears.

peter williams, wcc

God at Work

The councils of churches have been promoting sanctions against the government of South Africa, not to impose love through sanctions, but to oblige them through those sanctions to recognize the other and begin to negotiate.

In situations of conflict all over the world, for example between the Kurds and the Turks, or between the Serbians and the Croates, we are victims of yesterday, prisoners of history. Our faith needs to convince us that a future that can be built, because God is still alive, God is still at work.

Then we will begin to preserve life and to create structures of encounter.

We will begin to pray together for reconciliation.

It will come to Los Angeles: we are walking together on this road.

May God bless you very richly. ❑

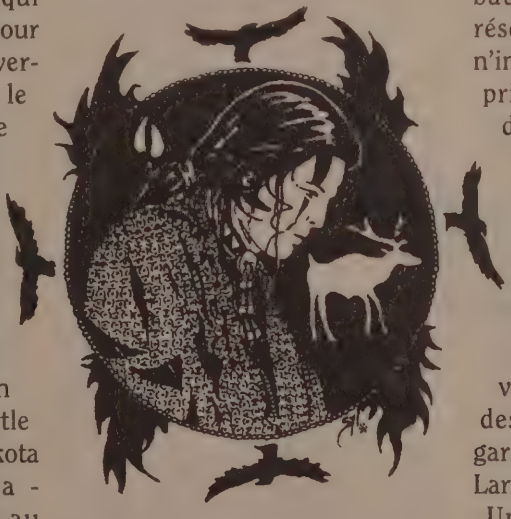
Anne Razali

Léonard Peltier, *épine dorsale* **Résistance** *de la* **Amérindienne**

Leader Spirituel Indien

Leader spirituel Indien, Léonard Peltier est également le plus ancien prisonnier politique du monde. Il croupit depuis 16 ans dans les prisons d'Amérique! Et si plus de vingt millions de signatures aujourd'hui s'accumulent en faveur de la révision de son procès, si le parlement Européen appuie la demande de révision de son procès, si des marches s'organisent régulièrement aux Etats-Unis et parfois en Europe - comme celle qui partait de Paris le 1er juin pour atteindre Barcelone à l'ouverture des jeux olympiques - le cas Léonard Peltier reste encore mal connu du grand public.

Fonder une famille, se consacrer à la peinture. Tel était le rêve de jeunesse de Léonard Peltier. La vie en a décidé autrement. Car lorsqu'on naît dans une réserve - Turtle Mountain, dans le Nord Dakota à la frontière du Canada - lorsqu'on est confronté au racisme brutal et à la pauvreté, soit on se réfugie dans l'alcoolisme ou alors on s'engage à changer les choses. La défense des droits fondamentaux de son peuple devient tout naturellement l'objectif de sa vie. Mais par tempérament et à la différence d'autres leaders Indiens, Léonard Peltier préfère le travail concret à l'ombre des réserves plutôt que le show médiatique. En organisateur né, il met sur pied un programme d'éducation pour les enfants Indiens. Son premier contact avec le mouvement politique de résistance amérindien fondé en 1968, l'American Indian Movement (AIM), a lieu en 1970 lors de l'occupation de Fort Lawton, une base militaire érigée en terre Indienne. En 1972, il s'occupe d'organiser la sécurité d'une marche "la piste



des traités violés" qui, partant des réserves, traverse les Etats-Unis jusqu'à Washington D.C.. A partir de là, Léonard Peltier s'implique de plus en plus dans les activités de l'AIM et devient la véritable épine dorsale de la résistance Indienne. Son charisme naturel dérange les autorités policières Américaines dont il devient bientôt la cible. Et c'est sur la réserve de Pine Ridge, dans le Dakota Sud, que les menaces se concrétiseront par la prison à vie.

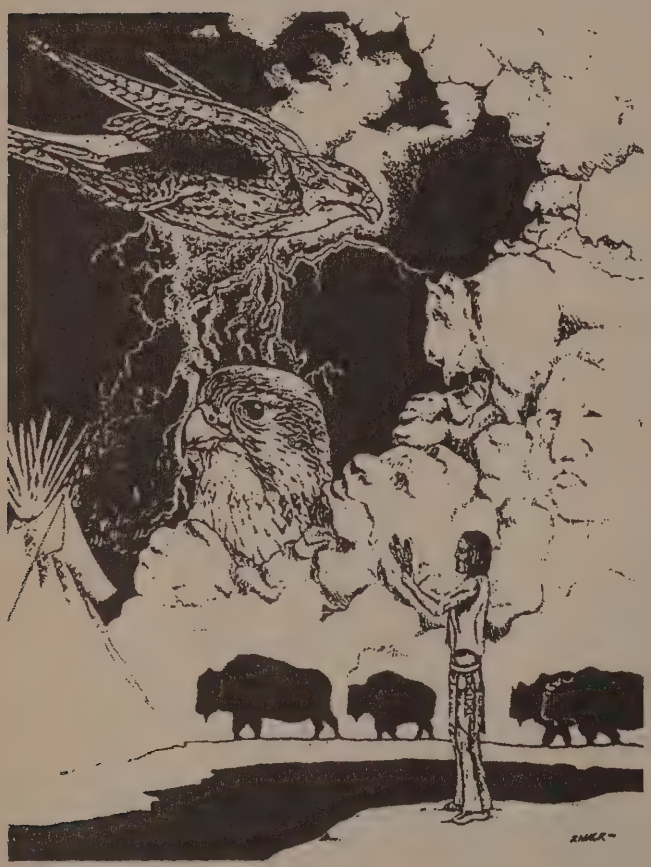
Mouvement Traditionaliste

Comment cela a-t-il été possible et pourquoi à Pine Ridge? Les réserves sont administrées par un Conseil Tribal. Ces gouvernements tribaux sont libres de gérer la réserve dans la mesure où ils n'interfèrent pas avec l'objectif prioritaire du gouvernement des Etats-Unis qui est l'extraction des ressources. A Pine Ridge, en février 1973, se développe un mouvement traditionaliste qui s'efforce de suivre les voies spirituelles et culturelles des ancêtres et qui veut reprendre le contrôle des terres et des ressources garanties par le traité de Fort Laramie en 1868.

Un nouveau président du Conseil Tribal, Richard Wilson, est alors élu. Son premier objectif: créer les "Goons", une force terroriste équipée par la police du Bureau des Affaires Indiennes (BIA). Une campagne de terreur s'orchestre sur la réserve. Agressions, harcèlements conduisent à l'occupa-

tion bien connue de Wounded Knee puis à la mort ou à l'emprisonnement de nombreux militants de l'AIM.

Mais la violence déclarée continue sur la réserve. En 1975, les anciens demandent de l'aide au groupe "Nord Ouest" de l'AIM, dont Léonard Peltier est membre, pour défendre leur communauté. Un camp est dressé sur les terres de la famille Jumping Bull afin d'établir des rondes de patrouilles.



Le 26 juin, un grand nombre de forces paramilitaires se massent dans la région. En fin de matinée, un incident met le feu aux poudres: deux agents spéciaux du FBI poursuivent la camionnette d'un jeune Indien qui aurait, soit disant, volé des bottes de cow-boys. Des coups de feu sont échangés. Au bruit, des membres du camp de l'AIM accourent tandis que les troupes fédérales commencent à envahir le terrain de Jumping Bull. Sur le lieu des coups de feu 200 soldats font bientôt face à 8 ou 10 adultes et quelques adolescents. On apprend que les deux agents ont été tués ainsi qu'un membre du AIM. Les troupes fédérales donnent alors l'assaut, gazent des maisons et tirent à vue sur n'importe qui. Ce même jour, le président du Conseil Tribal Indien, Richard Wilson, cède - contre la volonté affirmée des anciens - le 1/8 de la réserve: le sous-sol est riche en pétrole, en gaz, en uranium.

Procès Fantoche

Deux indiens, Bob Robideau et Dino Butler sont accusés du meurtre des deux agents puis disculpés pour avoir usé du droit à l'autodéfense. Léonard Peltier, connaissant les intentions à son égard, demande l'asile politique au Canada. Au cours de l'année, en violation d'un accord passé entre les deux pays, il est extradé aux Etats-Unis puis inculpé sur la base de témoignages falsifiés. Il est condamné à la détention à vie par l'avocat de district qui admet cependant ne pouvoir prouver qui a tué. Une enquête balistique du FBI révèle que les projectiles du meurtre ne peuvent provenir de l'arme de Peltier. La défense, elle, n'a pas accès au rapport. Une nouvelle audience a lieu en 1991. Audience fantoche: l'inculpé n'est autorisé à comparaître, aucun nouveau témoin n'a le droit de s'exprimer et le juge Paul Benson refuse une réouverture de la procédure.

Enfermé au pénitencier de Marion dans L'Illinois, il subit les méthodes dites de "modification du comportement". Ayant appris qu'on projetait de l'assassiner, il tente de s'évader. Il échoue. On le transfère à Leavenworth, au Kensas. Privé des soins nécessaires, gravement atteint dans sa santé, Léonard Peltier a aujourd'hui 48 ans et presque totalement perdu la vue d'un oeil.

Sa résistance sans compromis alimente un mouvement international qui se concentre non seulement sur son cas mais sur les problèmes des peuples autochtones en général. Sa force morale agit sur de nombreux prisonniers Indiens qui, en sortant s'engagent pour sa défense. Ses peintures créées en prison sont également un symbole de la lutte Indienne. Conséquence? Sa situation de prisonnier d'opinion ne s'améliore. Pour preuve cet événement survenu début juillet: une révolte éclate dans la prison de Leavenworth. Léonard Peltier - qui n'a en rien participé au conflit - subit les mauvais traitements au même titre que ses compagnons de cellule. Il est ensuite enfermé une semaine dans une cellule de confinement, on parle de le transférer dans une prison nouvellement construite en sous-sol dans le Colorado. Des appels téléphoniques du monde entier empêcheront ce transfert.

Le livre "In Spirit of Crazy Horse" de Peter Matthiessen raconte dans le détail le cas Peltier. Un film documentaire, tourné par Robert Redford "Incident at Oglala" est sur le point de circuler dans les plus grandes villes du Canada. Ce film reprend les événements de 1975 sur la réserve de Pine Ridge et les circonstances qui ont abouti à la condamnation de Léonard Peltier.

L'espoir, viendrait-il du Canada?

Au Canada, le cas Léonard Peltier fait des vagues. La violation frauduleuse du traité d'extradition établit entre les deux pays est dénoncée. La Cour suprême du Canada reconnaissait en 1989, 13 ans après les faits, que tous les efforts pour remédier à la situation de Léonard Peltier devraient venir du gouvernement Canadien. Une enquête est aujourd'hui en cours pour démontrer,point par point, l'attitude du Canada en la matière. Des individus et des organisations prennent l'affaire au sérieux. La plus grande organisation syndicale Canadienne d'automobile "Canadian Auto Workers" estime l'affaire comme prioritaire dans le cadre de sa lutte pour les Droits de l'homme. Le parti Nouveau Démocrate qui gouverne trois provinces au Canada considère Peltier comme un prisonnier politique injustement incarcéré pour avoir défendu les droits de son peuple et depuis cinq ans, une motion rédigée par les parlementaires Jim Fulton, NDP et Warren Allmend, libéral, solliciteur général lors de l'extradition, demandent son retour au Canada et l'annulation de l'extradition: une motion qui pourrait être étudiée en automne. De leur côté, 40 nouveaux démocrates et 16 libéraux ont signé un document en faveur d'un nouveau jugement et pour que toute la lumière soit faite sur les motifs de l'extradition. ❑

Journaliste Suisse, Anne Razali a travaillé comme rédactrice au journal La Vie Protestante à Genève. Actuellement journaliste indépendante, elle collabore à différents journaux Suisses.

Larry Rasmussen

Earth patriotism, Earth Ethics

Rio de Janeiro, Pentecost, 1992. The Earth Summit was a monumental success. Never have so many citizens' organizations (most of them mad as hell at their governments) or so many world leaders come together for a common cause. Even the threat of war was unable to accomplish what the epic challenge of common survival has — recognition that a global shift from the current pursuit of affluence to the elimination of poverty is mandatory for everyone's sake.

Furthermore, nations successfully took the first giant step from bilateral relations shaped by the Cold War to multilateral relations focused on one-world problems. Too, the sweep of concern and creativity among the 1400-plus non-govermental organizations (NGOs) was exhilarating. Rapidly expanding networks splicing North, South, East and West together sprang to life. A set of NGO treaties, 26 in all, was hammered out for citizens' groups now erupting everywhere. Whatever the books say was accomplished by midnight on June 14, simply stitching together this assembly and initiating this far-reaching, down-to-earth process was enough. As a conference the Earth Summit couldn't fail, and didn't.

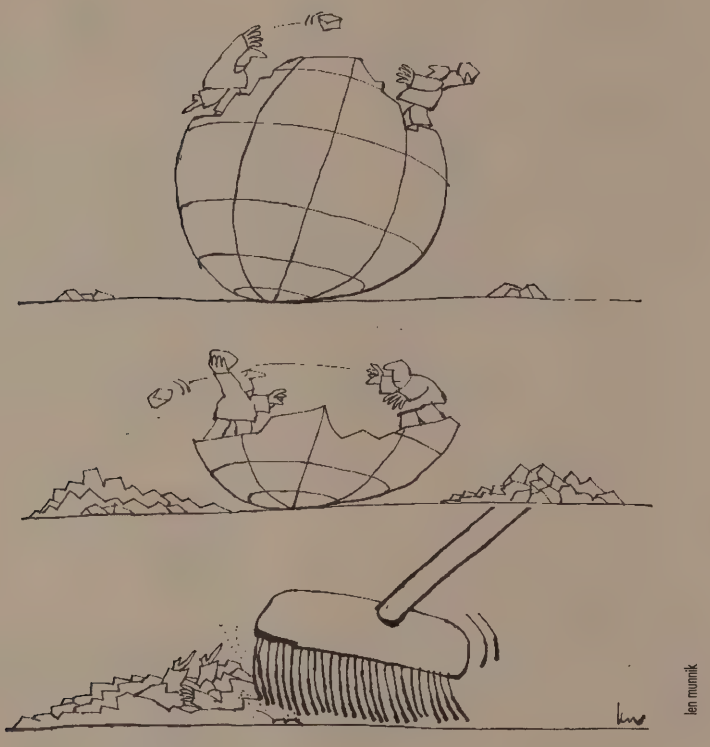
Rio de Janeiro, 1992. The Earth Summit was a monumental failure. The global threat to common survival should have been a unifying issue, but it wasn't. The Cold War was replaced with a North-South estrangement of yawning proportions. It was, more precisely, the stark revelation of a rich-poor abyss everywhere. Yes, the gathered in Rio shared a common analysis: High consumption patterns in the North and deep poverty in the South jeopardize the planet as never before; both must be changed dramatically; and population is a heavy multiplier on a planet already swinging a 'No Vacancy' sign. The shared assessment meant fractious politics, however, The hoped-for Magna Carta of a global ethic, the Earth Charter, was largely stillborn, replaced by something innocuous called the Rio Declaration. Agenda 21, the impressive 800-page compendium of recommendations on every conceivable environment-and-development issues, was, it is true, eventually endorsed by everyone. But the signatories aren't paying. Significant pledges were indeed made, but the price tag is at least $120 billion annually and that wasn't even broached.

The 20-year target of a paltry 0.7 percent of industrial nations' economic output for development aid was roundly rejected again as well. Kicking a habit they never had, the U.S., Germany, Japan, Britain, and others just said no. The treaty on climate change was gutted of timetables and targets for reducing carbon monoxide

emissions, the treaty to protect species went forward without key U.S. cooperation, and the forests agreement was downgraded to a charter of nonbinding recommendations. In the end, Rio's goal — to set the world on a track that promotes economic development everywhere in a way compatible with the biosphere's own unforgiving requirements — simply cannot be reached if prevailing economic relationships and dynamics are left in place. And left in place they were.

Rio as a whole, then, resembled nothing so much as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the U.S. — some very important things happening under competent leadership, but utterly marginal to the basic economic policy making decisions of government, business, and finance. In truth, the Earth Summit *couldn't* succeed because the commitments and mechanisms for basic changes in trade, debt, and aid were not forthcoming and were never really in the works. So an effective earth ethic will have to wait. Meanwhile, President Bush misread Rio in the same way he misread Los Angeles. The poor were not waving, they were drowning.

Rio de Janeiro, Pentecost 1992. The Earth Summit wasn't monumental at all. It was a few small steps hesitantly taken on a new path toward an uncertain future. The imperatives are very clear, the outcome not at all. All that happened for certain was the palpable eruption of hope and a few scattered signs and sounds of Pentecost as the Spirit's ecumenical visitation to a waiting world. No historical guarantees there. Yet you missed Rio altogether if you didn't notice what was missing downtown. In contrast to Rio-Centro and its endless parade of presidents and prime ministers to the podium, not one national flag flew at the Global Forum, and there was no podium. Only that single poster, everywhere, of a small marbled planet floating in space. And at the centre, the Tree of Life with its nonstop entourage of pilgrims. Pilgrims of every kind and colour making their vows, singing, dancing, meditating, and praying. And, oh, yes, messages, *millions* of messages, each scrawled on a paper leaf, the kind you cut from construction paper in grade school. Each from a small child, a child somewhere on that marbled planet. Our country, the planet, they asked: Yes or no. ❑



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Christianity & Crisis,
537 West 121st Street, New York
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Rebecca Larson

New heavens and **New Earth**

High above the city of Rio de Janeiro stands the statue of Christ the Redeemer. It is not inappropriate that this statue stands above this city - a microcosm of the overlapping crises of environment and development that threaten the future of our planet, and thus a fitting place for the governments of the world to gather for the "Earth Summit".

The right arm of the statue of Christ the Redeemer points towards Rio Centre, the immense conference site of the official UNCED meeting. Here, over 20,000 people, including government delegations and 103 heads of state, as well as representatives of over 1,400 community groups and NGO's, gathered to attempt to secure a just and environmentally sustainable future for humanity and the planet.

The substance of the summit was comprehensive and technical, dealing with such diverse issues as climate change, biodiversity, economic systems and transfers of capital and technology.

Many have called the summit a failure, forced into meaningless compromise by the lack of moral vision and political will. For others, the fact that the Earth Summit took place at all was an international and political acknowledgement of a global crisis which has to be solved together. For still others, the most significant and surprising aspect of the Earth Summit was that, for the first time at the most comprehensive gathering or world leaders ever held,

questions of spirituality and values began to be identified as key to the problems which face the planet.

But, if you had left the protocol and glitter of the formal Summit and looked again at the statue of Christ, you would see that the left arm points to a different reality.

Follow the line of the sleeve past the imprints of the nails in the hands, to the horizon, and you will find the community of Baixada Fluminense.

Those who call it home, know it to be a community of poor people, the majority of whom are Black. To outsiders, this community is best known by the statistics which describe it as the most violent of any in Brazil, with murdered street children, gang warfare and social breakdown.

It was in Baixada Fluminense that the World Council of Churches, convened 176 participants from 52 countries and more that 70 churches around the world under the theme "Searching for the New Heavens and the New Earth: A Christian Response to UNCED". The host of the meeting, Brazilian Bishop Dom Mauro Morelli, commented that "If Jesus Christ were to attend the Earth Summit, it would be to Baixada Fluminense that he would come."

Why did the churches try to have a presence in Rio at all? What challenges has the Earth Summit presented to churches for the future?

The WCC meeting at the Earth Summit focused on four ways in which churches have a particular contribution to make to the issues of UNCED.

Theological and Spritual Reflection

The first is to offer new theological and spiritual insights related to issues of economic and environmental justice. At a time when the traditional role of churches is changing, and, some would say, losing influence in increasingly secular societies, there are clear signs that these very societies are seeking new spiritual resources and social values to undergird political and personal decision-making.

If Jesus Christ were to attend the Earth Summit, it would be to Baixada Fluminense that He would come.

The UNCED challenges churches to build upon the theological work of Seoul and Canberra, and to engage in a deeper understanding of the theology of creation as it relates to the issues of JPIC.

Public Policy

The second contribution of churches has been and continues to be to the public policy debates on technical issues related to issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. WCC and certain member churches have been active in the preparatory stages of UNCED particularly by providing input into the Earth Charter, global warming, climate change and forestry issues. This work needs to continue.

The most ambitious Earth Summit agreement, Agenda 21, is a challenge for all nations into the 21st century. Significant issues, including the funding for Agenda 21 proposals, remain unresolved. Churches must play an ongoing role monitoring these international negotiations and encouraging their countries to participate actively and constructively toward resolving the critical problems of environment and development.

The Role of the Churches

Churches are committed to giving particular place to those who are poor, marginalized, and disproportionately bear the negative effects of the economic and environmental crisis of the world. Experience shows that this perspective is too often missing from government level negotiations and discussions.

One way in which the church can bring the perspectives and needs of the poor and marginalized to bear is by working together with other non-governmental community and grassroots organizations to address these issues.

The Global Forum, an integral part of the Earth Summit experience, was one of the most extensive gatherings of civil society ever held. Persons from some 14,000 organizations made their way to Rio, representing ordinary people from around the world who care about saving the earth and making it a more human place to live.

These groups are well-informed and knowledgeable about the decisions being made by governments.

They are not shy about letting their governments know that they take these issues seriously, and that they expect them too as well.

Roberto Savio, editor of TerraViva, one of the many daily newspapers covering the Earth Summit, commented that it is impossible "to deny that something new and vital has emerged from Rio: the conviction that it is the majority of ordinary people who are most concerned with the fate of the planet. This is something no government can ignore."

The World Council of Churches is one of these groups, contributing to the non-governmental movement of people toward a one earth community, continuing its work of analysis and empowerment from the perspective of the poor.

Worship

Fourth, churches offer space for spirituality and worship to model and ground a different understanding for relationships between people, God and the creation.

How does the church maintain hope in the face of the overwhelming difficulties faced by the majority of people in the world? How does the church proclaim the Good News in the face of the bad news of the world?

For the participants in the WCC UNCED meeting, the clearest answer to these questions came from the people of Baixada Fluminense who through music, song, prayer and action proclaimed their faith in a God of life and hope.

The rich worship experience of the WCC UNCED gathering meeting is reflected in the final report of the meeting, written as a Letter to the Churches. The body of the report draws upon the language and liturgical style of Paul's epistles, written to the faith communities of the early church.

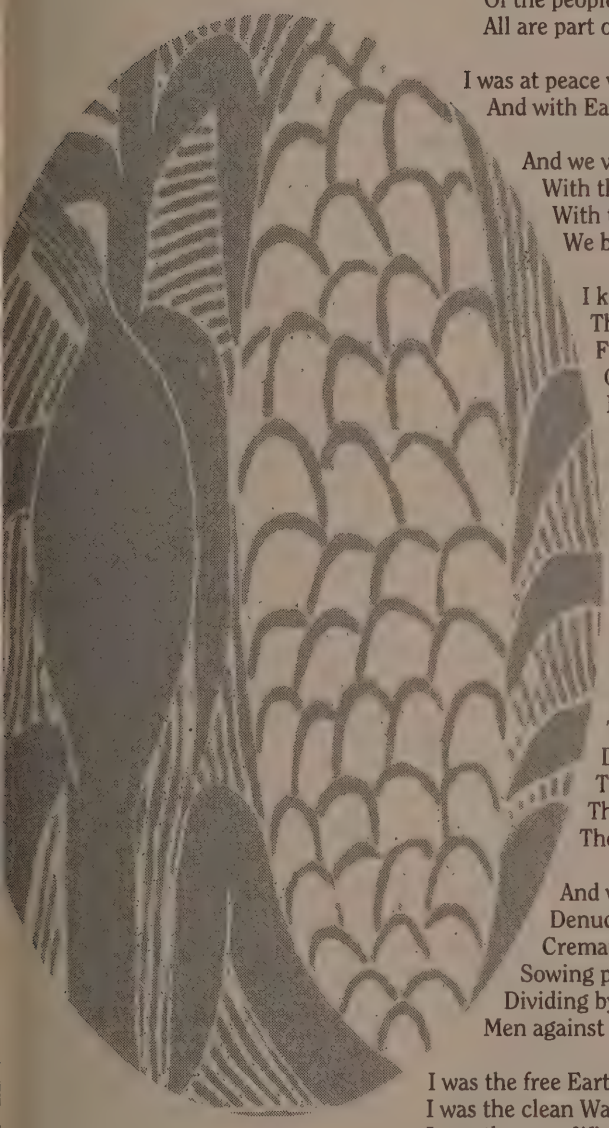
This final report from those gathered at Rio, and sent to Christians around the world, encourages and challenges them in their faith. It is a liturgical document, meant for use within worship, to form and inform a new vision of a new heaven and a new earth. ❑

Rev. Rebecca Larson is presently staff of the Programme Unit III of the WCC.

Copies of the final report of the WCC UNCED meeting are available from:*
Programme Unit III
World Council of Churches
P.O. Box 2100
1211 Geneva 2
Switzerland.

** see "UNCED Follow-Up" page 34*

Penitential Memory



My culture was thousands of years old,
Ancient as the sun,
Like the mountains and the rivers
Of the great Llagta-Mama.
I planted children and words.
I planted corn and manioc.
I sang in the language of the flutes.
I danced, dressed in moonlight,
Bedecked in birds and palms.
I was Culture in harmony with Mother Nature.

And, full of arrogance,
We destroyed it,
Denying the identity
Of the peoples who are different.
All are part of the Human Family.

I was at peace with myself
And with Earth...

And we violated you
With the blade of the sword
With the fire of the archer
We burned your tranquillity.

I knew the gold, the diamond, the silver,
The noble woods of the forests,
For me they were the holy ornaments
On the body of Mother Earth.
I respected Nature
As I respect my own wife.

Caravels of profit
We came sailing,
To sell the Earth
To explore while making profit...

I gave you the beauty of the Sea and its beaches,
I gave you my Earth and its secrets,
The birds, the fish, the animal friends,
The corn with its tight, divided rows,
The generous bulb of the manioc,
Daily bread,
The fragrant guarana (fruit) of the forest,
The soothing chimarrao (tea) of the south,
The medicines of Earth, our nurse...

And we plundered you,
Denuding your forests,
Cremating your fields,
Sowing poison in the rivers and in the air.
Dividing by fences the generous Earth:
Men against men...

I was the free Earth,
I was the clean Water,
I was the pure Wind,
Fertile with abundance,
Full of songs...

And we divided you
With rules and borders.
With greed's wounds
We lacerated the Earth.
We invaded the fields,
We invaded the Indian's homes,
We invaded Man.

D. Pedro Casaldaliga, Pedro Tierra and Martin Coplas
from
"Mass of the Earth Without Evil".

N.F. Thoko Mpumlwana

On True Liberation

God created the world and all creatures in it and saw that it was good. God's holiness was breathed into everything, and in a special way into human beings. Thanks be to God that I too am included in this blessing.

This belief has sustained me - a Black woman of South Africa

The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community ... there is no place for him in the European community ...

- in the battle against the evils of apartheid. It has led me to condemn in word and deed all forms of discrimination, whether on ethnic, racial, gender, or class distinctions.

I was born in a small rural village in Natal, Zululand. My father was a minister in what is now known as the United Congregational Church. My mother was a trained teacher, but was not allowed to teach. Although my upbringing was not very different from that of my brothers, I was deprived of some things because I was a girl. Many families believed that its was a waste of money to educate girls, because they were expected to get married and raise children. I was lucky, because my parents educated me as best they could in the apartheid system espoused by the Nationalist Party[1]. The minister for Black affairs, Dr. Hendrick Verwoerd, who piloted the notorious Bantu Education Act of 1953, summed up the government policy concerning Blacks:

> "The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community... There is no place for (him) in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour."[2]

For African women the situation was worse. They were excluded from education and development systems.

My father was a poor man and a pastor whose livelihood depended on the contributions of his congregation. My political conscience was first awakened when he was arrested in a spot check for not having paid a poll tax. Only Black males were subjected to such spot checks. Other members of my extended family were harassed because they had no permits to live in African townships[3] where they hoped to find jobs to feed their children already affected by malnutrition. These early experiences caused me to reflect on the meaning of being Black in South Africa.

At this time in my life the gender question was a non-issue. I uncritically accepted the societal stereotypes about women. In fact, I thought of them as natural.

At Inanda Seminary, a progressive and liberal church school for girls in Durban, Natal Province, subtle methods were used to teach us about the inherent evil of the apartheid system. We had regular contact with young White students. It was there that I first met Barney Pityana, who had come to talk to us about Black consciousness and the South African Students Organisation[4].

I also attended awareness-raising workshops staged by the Theatre Council of Natal (TECON) with the likes of Asha Rambally, Saths Cooper, and Sam and Strini Moodley, all of whom came to the school.

I went on to Fort Hare University in Alice, Cape Province, where my hatred for the apartheid system grew. The university was staffed with adherents of the Nationalist Party. We suspected that most of them belonged to a secret Broederbond, whose members were often placed in politically sensitive positions. We later learned that the rector, Professor De Wet, was indeed a member.

As students, we took up the issues of justice as they affected us both in our student capacity and as members of the wider oppressed Black community. We struggled to form a Student Representative Council, to which the authorities responded with repression. Our Fort Hare SASO branch was very strong. We involved ourselves in consciousness-raising community projects in villages around Alice. We continued to challenge the university and the administration for their policies, and thereby, indirectly, declared our hostility to the

state.

In 1973 I was expelled from Fort Hare for reasons that have not yet been revealed. I was never told why, and in fact I never appeared before any university disciplinary committee. That was Rector De Wet's justice! Instead of being hurt, I was angry and determined to struggle on.

Gender issues were still not part of the political agenda at that point. Women were thought of as playing a supportive role, although there were women who refused to be subservient to men.

At this stage in my life I had lost confidence in the church and its structures, because I found it was silent on the issues that affected people's lives.

From 1975 in King Williamstown I experienced the most formidable years of my political journey. I was engaged as a research assistant for the Eastern Cape branch of Black Community Programmes Ltd.(BCP), a community development organization under the national directorship of Bennie Khoapa in Durban, with Steve Biko as Branch Executive in King Williamstown.

The community spirit that existed there strengthened my political commitment. I saw young men and women who had dedicated their lives to the liberation of the land. I often say that BCP gave me a real education, contrary to the academic stuff I had been given at Fort Hare!

It was here that I saw some of the finest citizens of the country harassed, detained, banned and killed for their beliefs. My anger mounted and I realized that it was urgent to bring down the government when I too was banned and detained as a threat to state security. The outlawing of all our organizations in 1977 was the last straw. From then on we filled the jails of Eastern Cape. I will never forget my detention in 1978: I was incarcerated for three months, along with my three-months old baby. The local police wanted to show their superiors how hard they could work.

By the 1980s the churches had become more vocal about justice issues. A number of people close to me helped me realize that the scriptures never condoned oppression. I began to find meaning in the church. And my understanding of liberation had deepened. I had come to realize that true liberation meant liberation from all forms of oppression, political, gender, economic, class, religious, ethnic or racial oppression. I developed a utopia of complete happiness, peace and freedom. I know utopia never comes, but it is healthy to strive for the values it promises.

The more I worked with church women, the more I realized that unless a country takes the development of women seriously, economic growth and wholesome development will always be undermined.

The gender stereotypes we live with have their lighter moments! I recall an incident with the police in the eighties when we lived in Cape Town. The police came to search our house and detained my husband because they believed that we had knowledge of the whereabouts of a trained freedom fighter. Indeed, a young man had been visiting us from time to time. When questioned by the police, I played the role of the simple wife who knows nothing about 'Daddy's guests, and they bought it! I believe many women have used this trick.

Cultural practices have also been used to keep us Black women at the bottom of the social ladder. I have seen people claim that it is unnatural for women to develop to their fullest potential. In my own church there are many men of ordinary talents who serve as leaders and stewards because of gender discrimination. Yet there are many dynamic women who could perform those tasks better. This cultural excuse has kept women from job promotions and denied them education and training. In my work as a teacher I have also seen many men obtain senior positions because of gender discrimination. There is a stubborn reluctance in our traditional society to break this cycle. I have been verbally abused, declared a westernized sell-out, and humiliated in my

peter hygesen, danchurch aid

church at work for my belief in the dignity of all human beings. Sometimes the people who are most vocal about racial injustice and apartheid are the very ones who refuse to see the similarities in the case of gender discrimination. They do not see this as a justice issue or a question of human rights, "Let's get political liberation first, " they say, "then women can start their thing later." The gender issue is divisive, they claim.

I believe that unless families, employers, and churches seriously address the question of gender inequalities, many of society's problems will remain unresolved. How can we talk about economic development if the majority of citizens (who are women) are not included in the debate, or if they are not sufficiently trained to be of leadership value in the economy?

The pride and confidence in myself as a woman, nurtured by my schooling, remains with me today. The Black consciousness of the 1970s instilled in me the spirit of self-pride and self-reliance as a Black person, enabling me to relate to all other people on a truly non-racial basis. I am at peace with myself. My religious beliefs have pulled these things together into a whole. The Christian values of love, justice and peace have crystallized my commitment. I am grateful for these foundations. ❑

NOTES

1. The Nationalist Party has governed South Africa since 1948. It introduced and enforced the apartheid policies of statutory discrimination against Blacks in all spheres of life.

2. Hendrick Verwoerd later became the Prime Minister of South Africa.

3. These are Black ghettoes created under the Race Areas Act and the Influx Control Act which confined Africans to 13% of the total land mass of the country and regulated residence in the African townships.

4. SASO was founded on the inspiration of Steve Biko. Its aim was to raise the political conscience of Black students.

N.F.Thoko Mpumlwana is a member of the Unit III Commission and Moderator of the Working Group on Women.

WCC Monitors in **South Africa**

An international team of ecumenical monitors arrived in Johannesburg, South Africa last September 24, the first stop on a 6-day tour that was to take them on to Durban, East London and Cape Town. Team members were to confer with government and church leaders on the problem of recurrent violence in South Africa as well as provide expertize and counsel in situations were violence threatens to erupt. Other teams are to follow. They will provide a continuous presence in the country as the difficult process of transition from the apartheid regime to a democratically elected government via constitutional reform goes on.

The decision to set up a system of ecumenical monitoring by the churches was the logical follow-up to the recommendation of the Vancouver Assembly (Canberra, February 1992) to continue to support the struggle against racism and to promote responsible engagement by the churches in the evolving situation in South Africa.

The worldwide Christian community, along with many other secular organizations, is committed to the eradication of apartheid and a peaceful and just resolution of the South African problem. WCC pioneered the worldwide campaign of economic sanctions against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Through the Special Fund the WCC has also provided financial and moral support to the South African liberation movements working to bring down the regime. WCC General Secretary Emilio Castro made the organization's first official visit to South Africa in fifty years in October 1991, following actions by South African State President F.W. de Klerk to loosen some of the legal restrictions of apartheid and engage the leaders of the

African National Congress in talks on the political future of the country.

Continuing violence in the townships of South Africa has marred the progress of the talks, bringing them to a standstill on several occasions. The ANC and its president Nelson Mandela accuse the government of fomenting the violence and inciting members of the rival Inkatha movement, led by Chief M. Buthelezi, to murderous attacks on ANC supporters. The Boipatong massacres of last June, in which more than forty people died, and the killings in the Ciskei of thirty-eight unarmed ANC demonstrators on September 7th, heightened tensions in an already volatile situation (7000 Blacks have met violent death in South Africa since 1990).

The worldwide Christian community, along with many other secular organizations, is committed to the eradication of apartheid and a peaceful and just resolution of the South African problem.

No Lifting of Sanctions

In the wake of the killings the WCC called on the international community not to lift remaining sanctions on South Africa. In a letter to Douglas Hurd, the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs last September, the ecumenical body observed that the European Community was meeting at a time when serious matters were being considered by the EC, including the deteriorating situation in South Africa. The letter urged the EC to refrain from lifting any of the remaining sanctions imposed on the South African government. "All forms of economic pressure need to be maintained in order to ensure that the South African government will be keenly aware of and measure the scope and depth of the international reprobation of present developments in South Africa", the letter concluded.

With daily violence in the townships as a backdrop, the South African Council of Churches in May 1992 called on the de Klerk government to "recognize the value of an international monitoring mechanism ... and play its part in enabling the institution of such monitoring mechanisms as may be agreed upon..." Reflecting international concern, the United Nations Security Council met on 15 July 1992 to consider a draft resolution sponsored by the member states of the Organization of African Unity. It called on the Secretary-General "to appoint, as a matter of urgency, a special representative who would then recommend measures which would assist in bringing an effective end to the violence and in creating conditions for negotiations leading towards a peaceful transition to a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa, and submit a report as soon as possible." Mr Cyrus Vance was appointed special representative. He began a 10 day visit to South African on 21 July 1992.

Monitoring Network

Church organizations as well as other non-governmental bodies in South Africa agreed that any UN monitoring mechanism would need to be supplemented by a team of non-governmental international observers and a national non-governmental monitoring network. Because the churches have earned credibility in the struggle against apartheid, they are in a position to call upon teams of international observers who will be respected by all parties in the dispute. At the same time, the churches are urged to keep in close touch with the secular agencies engaged in a national monitoring programme in South Africa so as to ensure a comprehensive and effective programme.

The ecumenical monitoring teams are to collect information on incidents of violence and to make independent enquiries vital to the analysis of the situation. They are also to be alert to situations of potential violence and to use their

All forms of economic pressure need to be maintained in order to ensure that the South African government will be keenly aware of and measure the scope and depth of the international reprobation of present developments in South Africa.

influence and expertize to defuse such tensions. Given that the issue of violence and the process of negotiations to draw up a new constitution are closely linked, the teams are to monitor and report on the processes of negotiations and on any elections which may follow the talks.

They will be in a position to provide information on the situation in South Africa to the wider ecumenical movement.

Participating churches in South Africa are to form a National Ecumenical Committee to coordinate the monitoring programme and provide expertize and insight into the political dynamics of South Africa. It will be responsible for organizing the programme of the monitors, and identifying areas that need urgent attention.

The WCC, in collaboration with the South African Council of Churches and the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference, is to coordinate any international action which might result from the findings of the monitoring teams.

The initial phase of the monitoring programme will run over a six-month period and is to be followed up by an evaluation in late February 1993.

The first of the ecumenical monitoring teams was made up of the Rt. Rev. Sir Paul Reeves, (Aotearoa / New Zealand), Anglican Observer at the United Nations; Christine Davis, (UK), President of the Council of Churches in Britain/Ireland; Bishop Melvin Talbert, (USA, Methodist); Mr Jurgen Estrup, member of the Danish Parliament; Bishop Boniface Tshosa Setlalekgosi of Gaborone, Botswana; and staff members Rev. Bob Scott (Aotearoa/New Zealand); and Rev John Evenson (USA). ❑

For further information on the Ecumenical Monitoring Programme on South Africa (EMPSA): please contact International Coordinator, Unit III Justice, Peace and Creation, WCC.

WCC archive

Bob Scott

Ecumenical Monitoring Programme on **South Africa**

"In the eight months to September 1st 2,483 people have died in political violence and 3,840 have been injured. The fabric of South African society continues to be torn apart by the violence of apartheid" said the group at their final press conference before leaving Johannesburg.

I accompanied the first ecumenical monitoring team to South Africa on their gruelling six day schedule which took them to five different parts of the country. The Ecumenical Monitoring Programme on South Africa (EMPSA) has been hailed as a major contribution the churches can make to lowering the level of violence. Without exception, everyone the group spoke to confirmed that the presence of international monitors at confrontational events, such as mass demonstrations, significantly reduces the potential for violence.

This first team had the task of launching EMPSA and giving it a high media and community profile. The WCC General Secretary invited five church leaders from the USA, Great Britain, Denmark and Botswana.

Called the 'Ecumenical Eminent Persons Group', it was led by the Rt Rev. Sir Paul Reeves, former Anglican archbishop and Governor-General of Aotearoa-New Zealand and presently the Anglican Church's Observer at the United Nations in New York.

Subsequent EMPSA teams of between 15 and 20 people will spend up to six weeks in the country and the programme is expected to last over six months.

"In the eight months to September 1st 2,483 people have died in political violence and 3,840 have been injured. The fabric of South African society continues to be torn apart by the violence of apartheid" said the group at their final press conference before leaving Johannesburg for London.

"We have a deep impression of the urgent need to break the cycle of violence. There cannot be free and fair elections until the climate of intimidation and violence has abated. At the same time we know that the violence will not abate until all sections of society have a voice in the even application of the Peace Accord and control of the military forces. The only solution to resolve this dilemma is the creation of an interim government, of limited duration, whose task it will be to oversee the administration of justice and the speedy transition to democratic representative government"

The group was critical of the way the National Peace Accord operates. It was their impression that the application of the Accord focuses on violations committed by the Black community but does not hold the Government and its Homelands structures to the same accountability. They recommended that the National Peace Accord itself should be the subject of critical monitoring.

Within an hour of arriving in Johannesburg after an overnight flight from London the group was in a private plane sent by KwaZulu Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi, heading for Ulundi. The Inkatha Freedom Party leader was eager to see the group first and took the opportunity to complain that the churches in South Africa were uneven in their compassion by refusing to attend funerals of Inkatha victims of violence.

In his meeting with the group the ANC president Nelson Mandela admitted that there had been a time when the ANC

was innocent of political violence but that ANC supporters, under fire from government security forces, homelands police and Inkatha hostel dwellers, were now forced into fighting back in self defence. He spoke movingly of his visit to Boipatong some days after the massacre when he was greeted by a huge crowd singing " You are behaving like a lamb when we are dying". The ANC leader said "The question is, how do we get out of this mess?"

"The Bantustans were created to divide the country. Federalism is Bantustans in another word."

As the group left South Africa the government released 150 political prisoners as a necessary compromise to restarting negotiations with the ANC. Nelson Mandela and State President de Klerk had held one day of preliminary discussions. But there is a long way to go before substantive negotiations on the transition of power begin again. The high level of violence remains the stumbling block.

The situation is still volatile. The Group wrote in its report:

"For those who had hoped that the nightmare of apartheid would soon end there remains deep frustration. Apartheid has worked successfully for the oppressors. What exists today is not simply Black divided from White but deepening divisions between pro and anti apartheid forces. The Homelands have been an integral part of the structure of apartheid of successive South African governments; they now represent a power base which its Black protagonists are not willing to let go. If all other methods fail many victims of apartheid feel that the only option is to take up arms to protect themselves. The South African Government may know how to govern for the benefit of the White minority but seems to have little understanding of how to govern for all South Africans."

Meetings were held in Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town and East London, where the group visited the site of the Bisho massacre and met with refugees sheltering in the township. They also met members of the Ciskei government. Visits were made to two townships in Natal, near Port Shepstone. The first was to Bomela where some Inkatha supporters had been killed recently and the second was to Murchison where ANC supporters had sought refuge in the local hospital.

There were meetings and briefings with human rights groups, the staff of regional Peace Secretariat offices, independent national monitors, churches, Black Sash, lawyers and the United Nations Observer Mission.

Pan Africanist Congress President Clarence Mlamli Makwetu urged the group to use their influence to rid the country of mercenaries. Welcoming the group he said that the PAC had always maintained the position that international help was needed to resolve the question of violence in the country. "The violence is beyond our control," said the president, " but it is not beyond the control of the regime."

The current debate about federalism was firmly answered by President Makwetu. "The Bantustans were created to divide the country. Federalism is Bantustans in another word."

The Ecumenical Eminent Persons Group remained pessimistic about the economic future.

"For the powerful, self-interest remains the basis of the quest for a new South Africa. The business community may realize the need to change apartheid but still wishes to preserve an economic order in which the structural inequalities remain."

In his meeting with the group State President de Klerk said he welcomed fact-finding missions from the international community but disagreed that they

Group members join local people, in prayer at the site of the Bisho massacre.

peter williams, wcc

should be monitors. He prefers the word 'observers'. But the Ecumenical Eminent Persons Group rejected that. " *We are convinced that those from the international community must come, not merely to observe people being killed, but to make a positive contribution to stop the killings in order that the momentum for democratic change can be regained.*"

Mr de Klerk stressed the need for the ecumenical teams to be impartial and agreed that the government would cooperate with them because he was keenly aware that, if negative things are reported then the country's influence overseas is affected.

In many television, radio and newspaper interviews the group announced the forthcoming monitoring teams and re-affirmed the church's position. "*People of faith do not endorse the oppressors of society. St Luke reminds us that if the oppressed are to be uplifted and the hungry fed, then oppressive governments must be brought down from their thrones and the rich share the poverty of the people. Sadly, this moral imperative of the Gospel has been ignored in South Africa.*"

The group has reported to WCC General Secretary Dr Emilio Castro and their report is now being distributed within South Africa and to all WCC member churches and through the Vatican Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace. ❑

Rev. Bob Scott is presently staff of the Programme Unit III of the WCC.

Niall Crowley

Racism and the **Irish Travellers**

Irish Travellers are a nomadic ethnic group. While little is know of their origins, studies of their language indicate that they are an Indigenous people of some antiquity. They make up approximately 0.5 per cent of the Irish population. It is estimated that there are 20,000 Travellers in Ireland with a further 15,000 Irish Travellers in Britain. They are Ireland's largest minority ethnic group.

At present Travellers are largely urban based with the bulk of the population in the cities of Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Cork. Up to the 1940s the Travellers were predominantly a rural people. Tinsmithing and horse dealing provided the economic base for the group. Ancillary activities included flower making, seasonal farm labour, chimney sweeping and mending crockery.

The introduction of plastics, the mass production of tinware and the exodus from the rural areas created an economic activities principally in the areas of waste recycling and scrap dealing. However, the "economic crisis continues and most Travellers depend on the social welfare system for a basic income.

Statistics on Travellers

The living conditions of the Travellers are perilous. These have been well documented in surveys and reports carried out over the last six years. The Economic and Social Research Institute reported in 1984 that 40% of Irish Travellers still live by the side of the road without any facilities and subject to the constant fear of eviction. They also found that 48% of Travellers had no access to running water and 50% had no access to a toilet. They concluded that "the circumstances of the Irish travelling people are intolerable. No humane and decent society, once made aware of such circumstances, could permit them to persist."[1]

The circumstances of the Irish travelling people are intolerable. No humane and decent society, once made aware of such circumstances, could permit them to persist.

In the following year the Health Research Board published figures that indicated that Travellers were only now reaching the life expectancy that settled Irish people achieved in the 1940s and the Traveller infant mortality rates were nearly three times the

national average. They concluded that "male Travellers have over twice the risk of dying in a given year than settled males whereas for female Travellers the risk is increased more than threefold".[2]

These statistics point to the economic, social and political exclusion experienced by the Travellers. They provide the evidence of the racist nature of Irish society. Clearly Travellers are not the only group that experiences racism in Ireland, however this article confines itself to their experience.

Immediate evidence of overt racism experienced by the Travellers is not hard to find. A quick perusal of recent press clippings provided the following material:

"The residents (of an estate outside Arklow) who are now to undertake a rent strike over the council decision to house the family of Travellers" - Wicklow People.

"A horrific attack involving the spraying of foul smelling cattle slurry against caravans of Traveller families has been criticized by a priest.. a Garda spokesman at the Tullow described it as a minor incident" - Irish Independent.

"The publican who barred 'Glenroe' actor Michael Collins from his pub confirmed last night he did so because he was a Traveller" - Irish Independent.

derek speirs/report

Hostility and Rejection

Travellers experience widespread hostility and rejection from the settled community. There is little that is covert or subtle about this. However, an analysis of the racism experienced by Travellers needs to go further than a focus on this experience at the individual or interpersonal level. It is important to identify the elements in a society that permit and give rise to these racist expressions of hostility and rejection. This requires engaging in an examination of Irish institutions and of the exercise of power in Irish society.

Denial is the dominant response to racism in Ireland. It is denied that racism is an Irish issue. The report of the European Community Parliament Committee of Inquiry on Racism and Xenophobia[3] quotes an Irish member of that body as stating that Ireland "has been remarkably free of such problems as there is not a large presence of foreigners." The very terms of the denial are racist, given the implication that it is the presence of 'foreigners' that causes racism.

This process extends to the Travellers in that the racism they suffer is denied through a denial of their ethnic identity. Their way of life and their culture is defined as a product of deviance or disadvantage. Policy and practice reflect an understanding of Travellers as failed settled people in need of rehabilitation. Travellers cannot access the power needed to be able to name themselves.

Dr. Charles Husband, in a talk given to a seminar on 'Ethnicity and the 'Irish Travellers' organized by the Dublin Travellers Education and Development Group, linked ethnicity and racism in the following manner:

"The way I want to link it is through the idea of power ... the dominant ethnic group has all the institution of the state in its control from the educational system to the media to the legal system ... institutional racism is about power, it is about who has the right to give resources to whom... institutional racism happens when people go about their normal business without thinking what are the implications for other ethnic groups".

Racism at the level of the institutions of a society tends to be more covert and hidden. More often it can be unconscious, implicating even those who are operating out of good intentions. It is only clearly evident in terms of the outcomes it produces for a minority ethnic group — outcomes such as those quoted from the surveys

mentioned above.

The use and abuse of skin colour is the dominant basis upon which racist ideologies are built. The case of the Irish Travellers, of Gypsies and Travellers throughout Europe, and of nomads throughout the world requires that sedentarism is examined as a basis for racializing groups and for constructing racist ideologies. J.P. Liegeois, writing on the history of Europe's Travellers and Gypsies, captures some of the historical roots of this when he states:

"The populace who had a healthy fear of witches and soothsayers, did not at first bring pressure on the state to reject Gypsies. It was the central state, just beginning to take shape itself, that took the lead in repressing people who were considered carriers of subversion and perversion regardless".[4]

He identifies nomads as ultimately representing a challenge to the central state's demand for control. He also identifies the key role of the state in the racism experienced by Europe's nomads. This is especially true in Ireland given the degree of dependence of Irish Travellers on the state due to the economic crisis the group continues to experience.

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism involves the practice, ethos, principles, decision-making structures of respected organizations and institutions in Irish society. It involves the legislature - a legislature that has failed to pass any comprehensive body of anti-racist legislation and that does not contain even one Traveller representative. Institutional racism involves all of us members of the dominant group that participate in and benefit from these institutions that exclude and oppress minority ethnic groups.

In highlighting how Travellers experience institutional racism the question that is being addressed is the extent to which Irish institutions, and in particular statutory institutions, do or do not respect and resource the Traveller way of life, culture and identity. An examination of the experience of nomadism, the health of the traveller economy and of the education system provide clear evidence of the racist nature of Irish society.

Nomadism

Nomadism is a key feature of the Traveller way of life. It primarily plays an economic function in enabling Travellers to reach a market big enough to make marginal economic activities visible. However, it also plays social and even psychological functions that are vital to the smooth functioning of Traveller society. Changing technology and new economic contexts have seen Traveller nomadism take different forms down through the years. Today the Hi-ace van and caravan have replaced the horse and barrel top wagon which in turn replaced the cart and shelter tent. Today nomadism can range from groups that travel long distances all year round, to those that travel limited circuits, to groups that travel for part of the year, to those who remain sedentary for long periods and then move on.

Local authorities and the central state have attempted to stifle Traveller nomadism. Large boulders are placed on traditional camping spots and there are numerous road side signs declaring that 'temporary dwellings are prohibited'. No transient short stay sites are provided. Inadequate halting sites are provided so that moving on carries the penalty of losing your serviced pitch. Access to public services such as education require Travellers to settle. The Irish legislature has recently passed two new Acts giving local authorities increased powers of eviction against Travellers camped on the roadside -including confiscation of their caravans.

Statutory policy in relation to Travellers is rooted in settlement. Local authority committees dealing with Traveller affairs are named 'Traveller Settlement Committees', and Travellers who are more nomadic and involved in trading activities are officially labelled 'traders' as if in some way to disguise their traveller identity.

"It was the central state, just beginning to take shape itself, that took the lead in repressing people who were considered carriers of subversion and perversion ..."

Just as nomadism suffers in a society committed to eliminating or denying ethnic difference, so too does the Traveller identity in an education system that is inflexibly mono-cultural. There is nothing in the school curriculum that would affirm the Traveller identity. It is left up to individual teachers to take up this challenge. There is

nothing in the curriculum that is specifically targeted for relevance to the Traveller way of life. Racism is not covered in the school curriculum and students are not prepared to face or to challenge a racist society. Segregation within schools is another major issue with special classes set up for Travellers within standard schools in many areas.

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Assimilation

Education has always been seen by the state as a key element in the project of 'rehabilitating' Travellers back into the settled way of life. It is an integral part of a process of attempted assimilation. The outcome is predictable. Less than 20% of Travellers of school age attend secondary level schooling.

A vibrant economy is vital to any group seeking to determine its own future. The crisis induced by a racist society into the Traveller community is difficult to address in a scenario of economic dependence. Yet Traveller efforts at economic independence are consistently blocked. Travellers availing of accommodation facilities provided by the state are not allowed to collect scrap for their homes. Traveller nomadism is frustrated despite the evidence that the most wealthy Travellers are usually the most nomadic. The statutory response has to date merely involved initiatives designed to incorporate the Travellers into the settled labour force.

Such a response fails to recognize the specific values and priorities around which Travellers have always organized their economic activities. As described above, mobility has always been a key feature of the Traveller economy so too has self employment - self employment that has meant no rigid separation between the Traveller workplace and living environment, and that has allowed Travellers to pursue their own cultural priorities outside of the boss/worker relationship. Waged labour is not a feature of the Traveller economy which is essentially a service economy based on immediate exchange of payment for service provided. Initiatives in support of the traveller economy that do not respect these features of their economy are assimilationist and racist.

Crisis

Traveller society is in crisis. Traveller health status surveys indicate the level of suffering resultant of this crisis. Institutional racism is at the root of this crisis. It also creates the context within which settled people internalize negative stereotypes of Travellers and which legitimize the widespread hostility and rejection described above.

There has always been resistance to this situation from both Travellers and settled people. In the last decade this resistance has taken a more organized form with the emergence of groups based on a partnership between Travellers and settled people and rooted in an analysis of racism and an acknowledgement of Traveller ethnic identity.

Progress is slow, inevitably when the first task is just to put racism on the agenda. However, there is a growing acknowledgement of racism as an Irish issue and a gradually developing anti-racist movement that extends across a range of sectors. At a political level a number of key statements have been made by government ministers acknowledging the ethnic identity of Travellers and identifying the need for new initiatives in addressing the situation of the Travellers. This provides little of immediate benefit to the Traveller community but it generates a more favourable context within which to pursue their rights. ❑

NOTES

1. The Population and Living Circumstances of Irish Travellers, Rottman, Dale-Tussing & Wiley, Dublin, Economic and Social Research Institute Paper 131, 1986.

2. Vital Statistics of travelling People, Barry, Herity & Solan, Dublin, Health Research Board, 1987.

3. Committee of Inquire on Racism and Xenophobia, Luxembourg, European Parliament, 1991.

4. Gypsies, J.P. Liegeois, London, Al Saqi Books, 1986.

Niall Crowley is a community worker with the Dublin Travellers Education and Development Group with a specific brief in relations to the Traveller economy. The Dublin Travellers and Education and Development Group is a mixed group of Travellers and settled people. Since 1985 the group has been working to promote and resource the ethnic identity of the Travellers and to highlight and challenge the racism in Irish society.

Adopted by Central Committee, August 1992

The churches' declaration on Racism in Europe

Preamble

The continent of Europe stands at the crossroads of history. There is now an opportunity to define the character of the continent and its peoples as it is being shaped by contemporary social and political developments. There is a variety of cultures and traditions which are bound to enrich the nations of Europe. This diversity is a gift from God and is to be celebrated. This cultural diversity is not a recent phenomenon but constitutes the historic character of the continent.

At this historical juncture, the moves towards closer communion among the 12 members of the European Community, are much advanced. The revolutions in eastern and central Europe now open up possibilities for a wider community of European nations.

At the same time, this state of flux in the continent can be detected in the movement and relocation of peoples: migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. Many of these are Black people or people who come from parts of the world outside Europe associated with former colonial ties. It is estimated that there are about 15 - 20 million of such people throughout Europe many of whom have become established in their countries of domicile. In some countries, these minorities make up as much as 5-10% of the population. It is also estimated that there are as much as 2 million clandestine or undocumented migrant workers and asylum-seekers throughout the continent. This movement of people can be accounted to economic reasons, repression at home, civil wars and natural disasters like drought and famine.

As the economic climate as well as the recession grips many European countries, policies have emerged whose sole intention is to restrict the influx of people. The primary targets of these restrictions have been Black people. Many European states are experiencing unprecedented forms of xenophobia and racism, racial abuse and violence. Racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, ethnic and nationalistic chauvinism all lead to breakdown in communities, cause much pain, divide families and lead to a spiral of violence. The victims of the severe economic climate tend to be Black people who constitute the bulk of the poor and marginalized, the unemployed and the homeless. Policies of racial exclusion continue to afflict the wellbeing of many Black people throughout Europe.

Declaration

This Central Committee, therefore, declares:

1 that the socio-political developments throughout Europe provide opportunities to mould new kinds of community, to expand the horizons of nationhood by multicultural interaction, tolerance and mutual respect;

2 that the Christian gospel rejects all forms of racial bigotry, nationalistic and ethnic chauvinism. All policies of racial exclusion and discrimination are contrary to the teachings of the gospel;

3 that there are positive values to nationalism and ethnicity and in cultures and religion which could enrich our common lives;

4 that anyone who promotes racist policies and anti-Semitism or is engaged in

The continent of Europe stands at the crossroads of history. There is now an opportunity to define the character of the continent and its peoples as it is being shaped by contemporary social and political developments.

racist-motivated violence or harassment is acting in an evil and sinful manner.

5 the most effective way of stabilizing the movement of people is to work consistently and rapidly towards a world of peace-with-justice for all. Policies with this human dimension should be coordinated with the countries which experience the exodus of peoples.

As the economic climate as well as the recession grips many European countries, policies have emerged whose sole intention is to restrict the influx of people. The primary targets of these restrictions have been Black people.

Programme of Action

The Central Committee adopts the following as a Programme of Action in which church and other religious communities may be engaged together so as to eradicate all forms of racial discrimination, racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism:

Discrimination

1 That discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, religion, national or ethnic origin should be declared unlawful.

The governments of Europe are called upon to:

a) fully implement the provisions of the Charter of Paris signed by the CSCE member states, giving guidelines for the protection of the rights of national minorities and to combat all forms of racial and ethnic hatred, anti-Semitism, xenophobia as well as discrimination and persecution based on religious and ideological grounds;

b) sign, ratify and implement fully the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the European Convention on Human Rights, including the recognition of the right of individual complaint;

c) develop at national and Europe-wide level legislation to ban discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, and to create fully supervisory structures similar to the British Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) the Dutch Landelijk Bureau Racismebestrijding (LBR) or the Ombudsman on Ethnic Discrimination in Sweden.

Religious Belief

2 That the right to practice religious belief should be affirmed for all throughout Europe even as sensitivity to the rights and responsibilities of others are respected. In the formulation of public policy, states are urged to pay regard to the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination based on Religion or Belief.

Civil Rights

3 That fundamental civil rights should be acknowledged and incorporated into national law:

a) to secure the legal and social position of migrant men, women and children, states are called upon to sign, ratify and implement fully the United Nations Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and their families, including the right of individual complaint;

b) refugees and migrants who have legal residence status within any European country should be entitled to the following fundamental rights within five years of legal residence in that country:

i) the same rights as to movement, residence and employment as the nationals of any one country are entitled to;

ii) the right to equal opportunity in employment, including training especially in the public service;

iii) the same rights to family unity as are enjoyed by the nationals of the country of residence;

iv) the right to vote in local elections in their communities of residence;

v) the right to housing, education and health care on the same terms as the nationals of any European states;

vi) the right to acquire citizenship of their adopted country and that procedures for so doing should be simple, accessible and inexpensive;

vii) the right to impartial treatment by the police and under the law, including the right of legal representation and fair trial.

Immigration Policies

4 The countries of Europe should adopt immigration policies and procedures which adequately:

a) address future demographic

trends and labour needs;

b) incorporate migrant workers already living in those countries for a substantial period of time;

c) avoid exacerbating the "brain drain" or the unilateral transfer of skilled and educated persons from less developed countries to Europe;

d) explicitly acknowledge the contributions of immigrants to the development and wellbeing of Europe.

Undocumented Workers

5 Steps should be taken to regularize the status of undocumented workers:

The human rights of such workers must be respected and states are urged to sign, ratify and implement fully the provisions of the ILO Convention 143 (concerning Migration in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers).

Refugees and Asylum

6 Refugees should be free to seek asylum in Europe and that the protective measures of international conventions should be applied to them:

a) that any harmonization of asylum policies should be carried out on the basis of a positive and compassionate interpretation of the Geneva Convention;

b) that national and regional refugee legislation should be extended to cover those forced to flee warfare and other social upheaval which cause people to seek security and safety in another country;

c) that carrier sanctions must be modified or eliminated in such a way that they may not be used to prevent asylum-seekers from presenting themselves at ports of entry in Europe and such that airline personnel may not be obliged to serve as immigration agents against the spirit of civil liberties;

d) that asylum-seekers should be entitled to due process of the law including proper legal representation as well as the right of appeal;

e) that asylum-seekers should not be imprisoned or held in detention solely on the basis of their claim to asylum or for lack of supporting documentation.

d) and hereby resolves:

1. to encourage churches in Europe to develop ways of engaging congregations in learning and practice in the awareness of racism in society and engage in actions to resist the proliferation of it;

2. to commend the above Programme of Action to their governments and public representatives as a means of ensuring a reconciled and peaceable society;

3. to renew our common commitment through the JPIC conciliar process to resist the evil of racism as our response of faith in God the Creator, and to the Love of God made manifest in the whole created order. ❑

What Can Our Readers Do Within Their Church And /Or Within Their Community

- *Invite someone knowledgeable about the presence of foreigners in your community to a discussion session with interested members of the congregation, e.g., association, etc.*

- *Welcome these people to a church social event, to services, etc.*

- *Find out what kind of practical assistance is needed - organize it.*

EGGYS

Ecumenical Global Gathering of **Youth and Students**

eggys archive

From May 25 to 30 1992, an extended Staff Working Group of the Ecumenical Gathering of Youth and Students (EGGYS), composed of representatives from the World Council of Churches Youth (WCC), the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF), the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS), the International Young Catholic Students (IYCS), and the World Alliance of the YMCAs, held a meeting at Domus Mariae, Rome, Italy. The meeting was hosted by the Catholic University Federation of Italy (affiliated to IMCS) and was called to finalize the content and composition of EGGYS' working groups, look at ways and means to uphold EGGYS national committees and regional processes, decide on the site and dates of the gathering, analyze the financial situation and hold a series of meetings with the offices of the Vatican.

Participants in these meetings were received by the Pontifical Council for the Christian Unity, the Secretary of State and the Pontifical Council for Laity. Words of appreciation and support were given to the process of ecumenical cooperation and the Gathering, in which two international Catholic student bodies, the IYCS and the IMCS, have been full partners from the onset. In his general audience of May 27, 1992, at Saint Peter's Square, His Holiness John Paul II greeted the EGGYS group in French and English.

Some 80 youth from 45 countries were selected to form the seven EGGYS working groups which will deal with issues ranging from Bible study and liturgy to education. Working groups are conceived as a means to contextualize and enrich the process of ecumenical cooperation by focusing on themes and issues relevant to youth and students all over the world.

A Catholic Centre (photo) owned by the Marist Brothers, the Fazenda Sao José das Paineiras in Mendes, Brazil, was chosen as the site for the Global Gathering, which will l held from **July 10 to 2 1993.**

Write to the
International Coordination Office
EGGYS
P.O. Box 2100
1211 Geneva 2
Switzerland

Some 80 youth from 45 countries were selected to form the seven EGGYS working groups which will deal with issues ranging from Bible study and liturgy to education.

Stewards *An ecumenical experience for young people*

The next meeting of he Central Committee f the World Council of Churches will take place n February 1994. There ill again be a group of oung people from dif- erent parts of the world articipating in the neeting as stewards. ou may have a chance o be one of them.

The Stewards Programme will ake place from February 13-27, 994, including arrival and eparture days. The rogramme has a three-day ori- ntation part prior to the work eriod. Additionally to this a ery limited number of stew- rds from each region will have possibility to join the xposure programme from ebruary 7-13, 1994.

Being a steward means first nd foremost, hard work. The ork done is often exhausting, ntense, and under pressure of eadlines. The main areas of sks to be carried out are:

- *Conference Room* - assist the onference room operation
- *Documentation* - assist in reparation, sorting, and deliv- ring documents
- *Communication* - assist in he coordination of services to ccredited press
- *Other tasks* - assist general dministration, sort mail, deliv- r messages, etc.

Apart from the work, stewards ave a unique opportunity to ncounter the ecumenical ovement from the inside. While not able to participate as delegates in the debates and discussions, stewards are an important part of the meetings of the ecumenical movement. As a community of young people from different churches, countries, cultures and languages, each of them bring something of their background, faith and commitment to an ecumenical experience of togetherness and friendship. Being a steward will be a challenge, encourage involvement and participation, and may indeed change your life.

Stewards are 18 to 30 years of age. English is the working language, but knowledge of additional languages is greatly appreciated. Due to the amount of work required, applicants need to be in good health. Working hours are irregular, and often special stewards programmes are planned after work, which means that the days will be long and tiring. Patience, and ability to work with people from other countries and cultures, and a willingness to work together as a team, is essential.

All stewards are expected to make a cash contribution towards their travel expenses, and in the case of the affluent nations, to cover these 100%. Some funds for subsidies exist, mostly for those coming from the developing countries. Please, complete the relevant sections concerning travel in the application form thoughtfully and clearly. Specific requests for assistance will be dealt with on a case by case basis. ❑

photo by peter williams, wcc

Interested In Becoming A Steward For The Next Central Committee Meeting Of The World Council of Churches?

Read the inserted application form carefully, complete it clearly and fully and send it to the address mentioned in the form by the deadline.

The selection of the stewards is made based on this form and only applications which are FULLY COMPLETED AND SENT IN TIME will be considered. The places in this programme are quite limited so some people are bound to be disappointed simply because there will not be enough places for all the well-qualified applicants. However, all the applicants will be informed about the decision by the end of June 1993.

WCC will be responsible for board and lodging expenses during the time of the programme and will provide some pocket money. Travel costs to and from the conference are to be borne by the steward personally, except in cases where partial subsidy is granted. Passport, visa and related expenses are the responsibility of the applicant. ❑

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justice, peace and creation news

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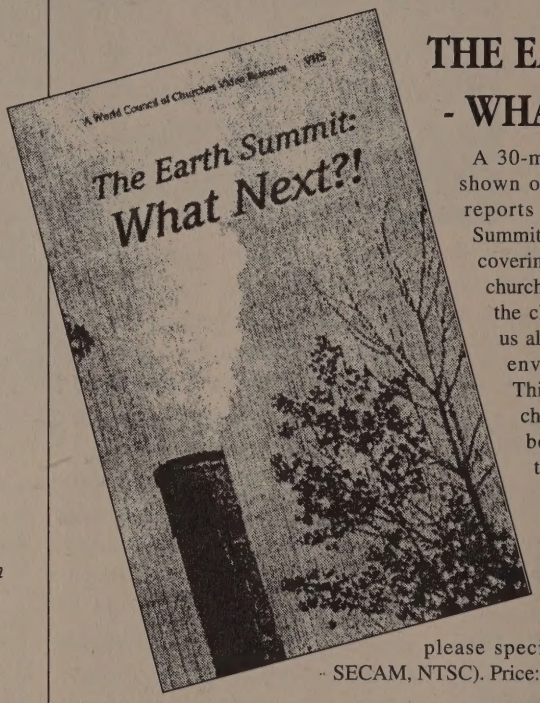
Copies of ECHOES can be ordered from the Unit III publications office at th WCC. Maximum 10 copies per order. The average cost of producing and mailin ECHOES is of SFr 5 (equivalent to US$ 3.00) per copy. Readers who can afford are strongly encouraged to contribute.

Individuals willing to express their commitment to the Unit III for Justice, Peac and Creation may also contribute in the same way.

Please make payment either by cheque in the name of the WCC or to the men tioned bank accounts with a very clear mention that it is for ECHOES magazine Unit III.

UNCED Follow-Up



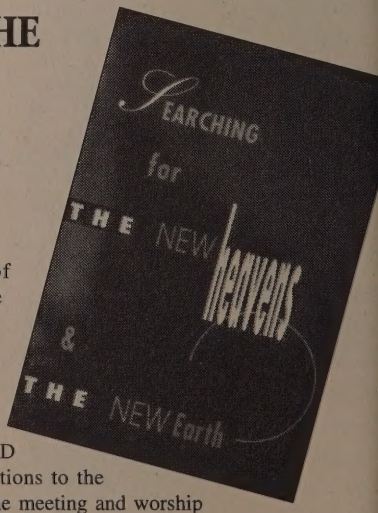
THE EARTH SUMMIT - WHAT NEXT?

A 30-minute video from the WCC shown over television in Canada. I reports on the results of the Earth Summit (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro covering in particular the role of th churches in this process, and sets ou the challenges that now are befor us all to reverse the global crisis o environment and development This is an excellent resource fo churches and groups who wish t be challenged on these ques tions.

Order from the WCC Communications Department Photo Oikoumene,
150 route de Ferney
P.O.Box 2100,
1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland
please specify the video system (PAL SECAM, NTSC). Price: Sfr.39.50, US$29.50.

SEARCHING FOR THE NEW HEAVENS & THE NEW EARTH

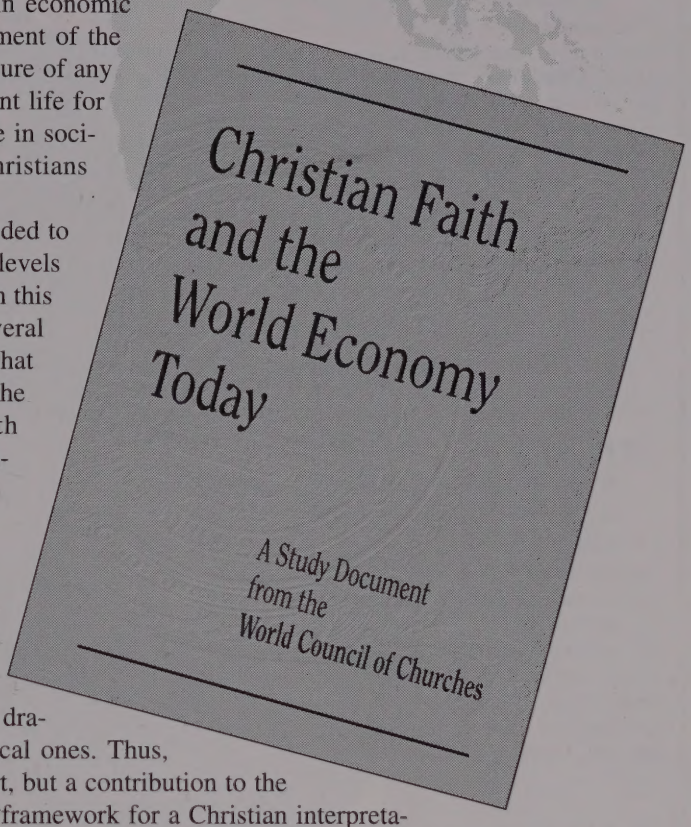
AN ECUMENICAL RESPONSE TO UNCED



(United Nations Conference of Environment and Development), is the title of a recent booklet published by Unit III's Group on UNCED. It is the record of the WCC gathering at the Global Forum in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. Includes the Letter to the Churches, an evaluation of the UNCED Conventions, reports and recommendations to the churches from the working groups of the meeting and worship resources. Available in English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian, from the UNCED Group, WCC.

For Your *In*Formation

CHRISTIAN FAITH AND THE WORLD ECONOMY TODAY



What responsibilities do churches and Christians have in economic life? This is the question which frames a new study document of the World Council of Churches. As the title suggests, the measure of any economic system is the extent to which it leads to "abundant life for all" (John 10:10), especially those who are most vulnerable in societies. It is from this vantage point that churches and Christians begin to discuss and take action on economic issues.

This document is not only for experts. Rather, it is intended to stimulate discussion and action on economic issues at all levels of churches and ecumenical groups. There is a way in which this paper is already a result of such discussions, because several years of reflection and comment have already gone into what is written so far. Consultations have been held throughout the world in regional meetings, with African women, with Orthodox participants, on an interfaith basis, and with educators, to shape the discussion so far. Over seventy churches and groups have responded to preliminary drafts. And yet the discussion continues - and needs to continue as new economic ways of living together in our world are sought.

This document was originally requested by the Central Committee meeting in Hanover, August 1988. Since that time the world economic situation has changed dramatically. The issues at stake are complicated and technical ones. Thus, this document is not meant as a final statement of some sort, but a contribution to the ecumenical debate on economic issues. It seeks to offer a "framework for a Christian interpretation of the world economic situation today."

Meeting in Geneva in August, the Central Committee formally adopted "Christian Faith and the World Economy Today" as a study document.

It is offered to churches at this critical time in the economic history of the world as a basis for study and action.

Available in English and German from:

WCC Publications 150, route de Ferney, P.O.Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland

Price: Sfr. 7.50, US$ 4.95, £ 3.25

IDOC INTERNAZIONALE

IDOC Internazionale - the International Documentation and Communication Centre - has published many interesting articles and dossiers in their publication IDOC Internazionale 3/92, mainly about the "Asian and African perspectives on the 500 years". They also have a special dossier:

IDOC DOSSIER: Africa facing Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation With its occasional Dossiers "Africa facing Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation" IDOC wants to offer a platform for current discussions in Africa on theological, political, economical and egological issues.

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Price: US$10.00 (US$5.00 in Africa).

The African Files-Africans on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation "The African Files" wants to be a service to all persons who like to be informed on what is being said by Africans on their own African problems regarding justice, peace, integrity of creation, human rights, self-determination, personal and national dignity, democratisation, de-militarisation, environmental protection, preservation of dignity. "The African Files" will bring monthly substantial abstract services of contributions by Africans from various linguistic regions in order to present to readers a variety of sources otherwise not always available in one particular information environment.

Price: US$10.00 (US$5.00 in Africa).

These can be ordered from:

IDOC INTERNAZIONALE, Via Santa Maria dell'Anima, 30, 00186 Rome, Italy

Fax: 68 32 766 *or 31 44 57*

A new harvest from WCC Publications

■ REDEEMING THE CREATION

by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, programme secretary in Unit III, Justice Peace and Creation, reports on the churches' participation in the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit and the churches' commitment to the goals of just and sustainable development. In clear and readable language, this book sets out the implications of that momentous international event for the churches and the ecumenical movement. Includes appendices from the WCC meeting held during the Earth Summit in Baixada Fluminense, outside of Rio. Available from the WCC Publications Department. Risk Book Series, 90 pp.
Price: Sfr.9.95, $6.95, £3.95.

■ EUROPE IN THE WORLD SYSTEM 1492 - 1992

Is Justice Possible?

Ulrich Duchrow

"Readers used to the writings of Duchrow will have to come to expect of him a stimulating blend of history, economics and theology, synthesized in a way that is both challenging and intellectually and spiritually nourishing" (from the translator's notes).
October 1992. Paperback, approx.
Sfr. 9.95, US$6.95, £4.50.

■ RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN A CHANGING WORLD

by Ninan Koshy

chronicles the involvement of the WCC in setting effective and just standards on freedom and non-discrimination in matters of reli

gion or belief. It is the fruit of an in-dep analysis of the nature and the implications religious liberty. Ninan Koshy served for any years on the staff of he WCC's commi sion of the Churches on International Affai and was its director from 1981 to 199 Available from WCC Publicatio Department. Risk Book Series, 115 pp. Pric Sfr. 12.50, $8.95, £4.95.

■ NEW BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The JPIC team on International Affairs w publish in the near future another editi of BACKGROUND INFORMATION will be called **Europe 1992 - Promi and Challenge**. It includes articles specialists (e.g. the former Secreta General of the European Commission, Euro-MP, and the Fijian Ambassador to t EC), on issues of relevance both to t churches and to the European Community. Subjects covered include Maastricht 199 Questions for the Churches, Problems a Challenges of Agricultural Policy in the E and Sovereignty, Democracy and Christi Values in the New Europe. The publicati includes articles on EC policy in the develo ing world, on refugees, asylum seekers a migrants, on economic and political optio and on other issues of direct relevance in search for justice, peace and the integrity creation.

A list of useful publications and addres completes the BACKGROUND INFORM TION. Its price is SF 5.- per copy, with red tions for bulk orders.

These resources are available from your bookseller, from WCC Publications, P.O. Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland, or from our distributors, including WCC Distribution Center, P.O. Box 348, Kutzto 19530-0348, USA; *CCBI Publications*, Inter Church House, 35-41 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL, Great Britain; *Anglican Book Centre*, 600 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Ont. M4Y 2J6, Canada; *Australian Co Churches*, Box C199, Clarence Street PO, Sydney NSW 2000, and *Beacon Hill Books*, Mitcham, Vict. 3132, Australia; *Epworth Bookshop*, P.O. Box 6133, Wellington, New Zealand.

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A new video available from the W

GENTLE BUT RADICAL

Chung Hyun Kyung shocked many delegate presentation at the World Council of Chur Assembly by invoking the spirits of victims of t Her image of the Holy Spirit, Chung said, derive gut feeling deep in my people's unconsciousness". For many theologians, Chu of syncretism.

The video follows Chung as she medita Buddhist monk, teaches feminist theolog Shamanist and Confucian rites, visits a p talks about the mother of whose existence only as an adult, and worships with other wo

As we watch and listen, we begin to und multifaceted Asian, Korean, experience Chung's theology is imbued. Confessi would like to "do theology that my m understand", Chung appeals to her critics: "Listen to us for a w be liberating, healing. Don't take our claims as a threat. It's an invitation, a gift."

Time: 32:45

Produced by: **KILIMANN PRODUCTION**, Essen, Germany.
Available from: **WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**, Visual Arts Section
P. O. Box 2100, CH - 1211 Geneva 2 - Switzerland ***Telephone*** **(022) 791 61 11** ***Telefax*** **(022) 79**